







# THE TRAIL OF OPIUM

*The Eleventh Plague*



*By the same author*



MADAME DE STAEL  
CHRISTINA OF SWEDEN  
FRANZ ANTON MESMER  
JOHN THE BAPTIST  
SEVEN WOMEN AGAINST THE WORLD  
ETC.





From an old pamphlet published by the  
Society for the Suppression of Opium Tra

*The opium smoker invites strange musicians to his home*

# THE TRAIL OF OPIUM

## *The Eleventh Plague*



MARGARET GOLDSMITH

*Illustrated*



LONDON

ROBERT HALE LIMITED

102 GREAT RUSSELL STREET W.C.1

1939

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY WESTERN PRINTING SERVICES LTD., BRISTOL

*To*  
*Dr. MARGARET HOGARTH*  
*with love and admiration*



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS



THE OPIUM SMOKER INVITES STRANGE MUSICIANS TO HIS HOME . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i> <i>facing page</i>
THE OPIUM SMOKER'S WIFE IS DESPERATE AND BREAKS HIS PIPE . . . . .	26
OPIUM POPPY ( <i>Papaver Somniferum</i> ) . . . . .	56
IN A CHINESE OPIUM DEN . . . . .	78
OPIUM SLEEP . . . . .	108
HOLLOW METAL BUTTONS USED FOR DRUG SMUGGLING . . . . .	132
RUSSELL PASHA . . . . .	156
OPIUM SMOKERS . . . . .	184
1. SOLES OF SHOES IN WHICH DRUGS WERE CONCEALED . . . . .	204
2. HIDING PLACE IN THE FLOOR OF JAPANESE DRUG FACTORY IN HANKOW . . . . .	204
1. HIDING PLACE FOR DRUGS IN JAPANESE FACTORY IN HANKOW . . . . .	234
2. ENTRANCE TO FACTORY . . . . .	234
ILICIT POPPY CULTIVATION SEIZED BY EGYPTIAN POLICE . . . . .	250
CHINESE COOLIE SMOKING OPIUM . . . . .	272



OUR age loves to label everything. We seem to believe that our clever classifications of the phenomena of nature make us better able to cope with them than were our ancestors. We have defined opium as we have all other vegetable products. Although, emotionally, on the 11th of November of every year, we acknowledge the poppy as the symbol of eternal sleep on the battlefield, we want a more realistic definition when we are in an ordinary mood. To us raw opium is known as "the spontaneously coagulated juice obtained from the capsules of the *papaver Somiferum* which has been submitted to the necessary manipulation for packing and transport."

Another conceit of this twentieth century is that when we have pinned down some commodity by chemical analysis, we tend to think that we have discovered its use, when actually, in a more primitive form, it may have been known to man for centuries.

Our age has not discovered opium. We are merely

more conscious of its beneficial and its terrible effects than were past generations. Opium has been a blessing and a curse as long as man has walked this earth. There are references to the juice of the poppy in Assyrian Medical Tablets belonging to King Asurbanipal, who lived in Babylon seven centuries before our own era. And in Sumerian ideograms of about 4,000 B.C. the poppy is called the "plant of joy." Capsules of poppies, not of the primitive plant, but of the cultivated *papaver*, dating back to 4,000 years ago, have been discovered in the Swiss lakes. Even in the Stone Age therefore opium was taken, and prehistoric man was aware that the "juice obtained from the green capsule of the poppy by incision into it is at first white, then after a time it becomes brown, and when exposed to the open air, consolidates into a red or darkish brown mass, which we call opium."

Always there have been men, seeking relief from physical and mental strain, who have sought and found products of nature which afford a passing period of forgetfulness. Always, too, these seekers after artificial numbness, have tried to forget that devastating depression which follows the short moment of oblivion from pain.

Long before recorded history began, the poppy juice was used to appease suffering or to give warriors what appeared to be courage while the battle lasted. The "drug of forgetfulness" is frequently mentioned in prehistoric literature.

"The ancients," as Dr. John Hill pointed out in the eighteenth century, "distinguished two kinds of this inspissated juice of the poppy; the one was the juice obtained by wounding the poppy heads. This they called

*Meconos Opos* and afterwards by way of eminence *opicon*. The other was a juice extracted from the whole plant bruised and pressed; this they called *Meconium*. They tell us that meconium was vastly weaker than opium."

In Homer's day both forms were frequently taken. His familiarity with the drug, in fact, causes the mature reader of his epics to lose many illusions harboured in childhood about the undaunted bravery of the Greek heroes. For it is obvious that they frequently took a dose of poppy juice in their wine to give themselves artificial self-assurance before they went forth to perform deeds of valour.

In the *Iliad*, Homer refers to Agamede, the yellow-haired son-in-law of Augeas, "who all the virtues knew of each medical herb the wide world grows." And in the *Odyssey* Homer records that when Telemachus visited Menelaus in Sparta, these men could not bear the memory of "Odysseus of the steadfast heart" without weeping, and that as a result they were unable to talk. Neither the host nor his guest could control their grief, and the meeting threatened to be unbearably sad. They "poured water over their hands" and tried to assume a more cheerful demeanour, but Helen of Troy, as clever as she was beautiful, realized that nothing would really give them self-control unless she did something drastic.

"Then Helen, daughter of Zeus," so Homer tells us, "took other counsel. Straightway she cast into the wine of which they were drinking a drug to quiet all pain and strife and bring forgetfulness of every ill. Who should drink this down, when it is mingled in the bowl, would not in the course of that day let a tear fall down over his

cheeks, no, not though his mother and father should lie there dead, or though before his face men should slay with the sword his brother or dear son, and his own eyes beheld it. Such cunning drugs had the daughter of Zeus, drugs of healing, which Polydamna, the wife of Thon had given her, a woman of Egypt, for there the earth the giver of grain, bears greatest store of drugs, many that are healing when mixed, and many that are bane-  
ful. . . .”

Helen, as this passage shows, was aware that Egypt was the country where the cultivation of the poppy was most highly developed. Egypt, the centre of medical knowledge in antiquity, was famous for the variety of the drugs it produced. Homer says that “Egypt was teeming with drugs, the land where each is a physician, skilful beyond all men,” and we are told in the Acts of the Apostles that “Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.”

At first, undoubtedly, in Egypt as elsewhere, the priests of the Temples guarded the secret of opium carefully, administering the poppy juice as a part of their magic rites. But as early as the sixteenth century B.C. and probably before this, opium was an acknowledged medicine which was systematically used by Egyptian physicians.

The toughness and the lasting quality of paper scrolls made of the stem of the papyrus plant have kept intact some of the Egyptian medical records written down thousands of years ago. Fragments of the *Veterinary and Gynaecological Papyri* from Kahun, dating back to 2160-1788 B.C. still exist, and in the *Therapeutic Papyrus of Thebes*, of 1552 B.C., discovered by Georg Moritz Ebers

in 1874, opium is specifically listed among the efficacious drugs recommended by Egyptian physicians.

In the *Papyrus*, in which suggestions for the most primitive kind of witchcraft cures are listed side by side with scientific advice, a special remedy is recommended for quietening children who drive their mothers to distraction by crying too much. This remedy obviously had the same effect on small Egyptians thousands of years ago as have some of the patent medicines administered by unsuspecting mothers in our own day. In this ancient Egyptian pacifier grains of opium "were mixed with the excretions of flies on the wall, strained to a pulp, passed through a sieve, and administered on four successive days."

This prescription is not as surprising as it seems at first sight, for it took medicine thousands of years to throw off this faith in human or animal matter. As late as the 17th century, for instance, Dr. Culpeper recommended "the ashes of the head of a coal black cat as a specific for such as have a skin growing over their sight."

From Egypt, opium's original home, at least the first home known to history, the poppy plant was transplanted to Asia Minor. Asia has, in fact, frequently been called the "cradle of opium" though it seems surprising that this harmless name should have been given to that part of the world which was the first to commercialize such a dangerous commodity.

Perhaps the gentle word "cradle" occurred to men in connection with opium because, since primitive days, they have associated this drug with sleep and temporary peace. Throughout antiquity, after the poppy was introduced in Greece and Rome from Asia Minor, the poppy

flower became the symbol of sleep. Somnus, the god of sleep, is frequently pictured as a young boy carrying a bunch of poppies and an opium horn in which the juice of the plant was collected. And whenever Sleep is portrayed as an older man with a beard, he too, is seen in reliefs and statues bearing an opium horn. This older figure of Sleep is usually described as bending over a sleeping man or woman, to whom he is giving the gift of sleep, by pouring poppy juice over their eyelids. Other ancient deities as well as Sleep were said to know about the mysterious influence of the poppy juice on the human mind and the human body. Ceres, for instance, the Roman goddess of fertility, who was called Demeter in Greece, was said to partake of the juice of the poppy to forget her pain—*ad oblivionem doloris*.

The cult of the poppy was not confined to mythology. Opium is mentioned again and again by the writers of the classical age. In the *Aeneid* Virgil speaks of a drink made of “dewy honey and soporific poppy”—*humida melle soporiferumque papaver*—and in the *Georgics* there is a line about “poppies soaked with the sleep of Lethe”—*Lethaeo perfusa papavera somno*.

The romantic view of the poppy juice expressed in ancient mythology and literature was not shared by the serious scientists of the Græco-Roman world. These doctors and naturalists realized and largely understood the terrible risks, as well as benefits, involved in the taking of this drug. Before the rise of the Greek schools of medicine, however, some physicians of antiquity considered opium as a cure-all for every sort of ailment. Assyrian physicians recommended opium, with a few

other drugs, such as balsam or licorice for almost all diseases.

"If a man's head hurts him," these Assyrian doctors urged, "his mouth pricks him, his eyes trouble him, his ears sing, his throat chokes him, his neck muscles hurt him . . . his fundament, his breast, his shoulders and loins hurt him, his fingers are cramped, his stomach is inflamed, his bowels are hot . . . his hands, his feet and his knees ache . . . his bowels are affected, or his kidneys are upsetting him . . . or he is sick of retention, either restriction of constipation or restriction of breath . . . or he is sick of nephritis, of bile or of jaundice . . . To assuage his obsession . . . poppy, 'stone' of poppy (opium). . . ."

The basis for a more scientific approach to the subject of opium in the ancient world was given by Hippocrates, the greatest of all physicians, as early as the fifth century, B.C. when he emancipated the cure of diseases from witchery and priest-craft, and founded the science of medicine and pharmacology.

Hippocrates himself came of a family of priest-physicians. From his earliest childhood he had lived in a Temple atmosphere, where the art of healing was irrationally confused with mystical conceptions of kind or revengeful gods. Until the great revolution in the art of healing which he inaugurated, priests had performed (or failed to perform) cures considered miraculous in the Temples of Aesculapius or Epidaurus. Apart from a primitive and perhaps unconscious form of hypnosis or suggestion, these priests had used opium and other strong drugs to impress their disciples.

Hippocrates destroyed their monopoly of healing, he exploded their teachings of unnatural causes and effects in disease and health. In his famous essay on the *Sacred Disease*, by which fantastic name epilepsy was known before his time, he said:

"I am about to discuss the disease called sacred. It is not, in my opinion, any more divine or sacred than other diseases, but has a natural cause, and its supposed divine origin is due to men's inexperience, and to their wonder at its peculiar character."

Hippocrates was not satisfied merely to enlighten his world about the natural origin of disease. He was equally determined in his efforts to show that certain drugs, including the juice of the poppy, which had been revered as magic, were perfectly natural phenomena. Thus he became the founder of a new age of pharmacology as well as of medicine.

There is no doubt that Hippocrates had studied the numerous drugs discovered and applied by the ancient Egyptians, but he had insight enough to realize that they had prescribed drugs too freely. It was easier, temporarily at least, to make a patient unconscious of his suffering by giving him opium than to discover the reason for this disease and to effect a lasting cure. Hippocrates tried to dissuade his fellow-physicians from giving too many medicines, such as opium. He was the first to advocate more gradual and more natural cures. He recommended proper diet, more fresh air, a change of environment.

He impressed upon his own disciples that even when a sick person asks for opium to deaden his pain, it is

not always wise for physicians to give it. And in his famous Hippocratic oath, which students of medicine about to qualify still repeat with respect all over the civilized world, he specifically said: "I will give no deadly medicine to anyone if asked, nor suggest any such counsel."

Hippocrates died in the year 370 B.C. Two years later, in Eresus on the island of Lesbos, Theophrastus, Aristotle's successor, applied Hippocrates' scientific methods to botany, and botany became a definite and separate science. By this time opium must have been quite generally known in Greece, for in his *History of Plants* Theophrastus includes a description of the cultivation and the harvesting of the opium-producing poppy. He knew that the poppy is an annual plant, which develops most readily in warm, moist soil, that in hot climates the seed should be sown late in the autumn and the juice harvested a few months later during the winter months.

In Theophrastus's time, however, and until several centuries later, physicians were not sure which was the best method of using poppy juice. The whole capsule was still frequently broken up and put into wine or some other beverage. The method of cutting open the capsules so that the juice would flow out neatly was not generally introduced until Scribonius Largus, the Emperor Claudius's doctor, in the first century of our own era, taught his fellow-physicians how to do this.

This careful incision of the capsules was recommended in the same century by Dioscorides, a provincial doctor from Asia Minor, who is known in medical history as the "Father of *Materia Medica*." Dioscorides went more

thoroughly into the subject of opium than his predecessors had done. He prescribed opium not only to make a patient sleep or to put him out of his pain. He also gave smaller doses for chronic disorders such as coughs.

During the period of the decline of Greece and Rome such small doses were not popular. Physicians and their patients had less constraint, and self-control than they had when Græco-Roman civilization was at its height. They needed more artificial stimuli, they could stand less pain. They seemed to think more of the present than of the future. Opium, which drugged the pain or the anxiety of the moment, was taken in greater quantities —the inevitable effects of the drug to-morrow or the next day were forgotten.

Galen, the most fashionable and the most able physician in Rome in the second century, who had a habit of running away from the City and his patients whenever an epidemic broke out, gave opium freely to the effete, charming Romans who came to him for medical advice. Galen praised opium above all other drugs and his recommendation of it sounds like a twentieth century publicity campaign on behalf of some manufacturer of a new drug.

“Opium,” Galen wrote in the second century A.D., “resists poison and venomous bites, cures inveterate headache, vertigo, deafness, epilepsy, apoplexy, dimness of sight, loss of voice, asthma, coughs of all kinds, spitting of blood, tightness of breath, colic, the iliac poison, jaundice, hardness of the spleen, stone, urinary complaints, fevers, dropsies, leprosies, the troubles to which women are subject, melancholy and all pestilences.”

Many of Galen's weaker-minded patients eagerly took his advice, and reached out for opium whenever they had a slight pain. Large quantities of opium were consumed during this decadent age. Sextus Empiricus, a contemporary of Galen, and historian of the Greek school of Scepticism, who was a physician as well as a philosopher, cites the case of a man, his name was Lysis, who was so accustomed to opium that he was able to take four drams in one dose without serious harm. The fact that Galen, intellectually a most capable physician, had so little discrimination in his prescriptions, and completely forgot the moral aspects of the Hippocratic Oath, was symptomatic of the decay of the Græco-Roman civilization. Galen was the last outstanding medical man of Greece. When he died, about the year A.D. 200, a great era of medicine had come to an end.

Long before Galen's day, opium had been recognized as a danger to society. From the time when the poppy juice became generally known and ceased to be kept a secret by priests or primitive medicine men, murderers often made use of it. It was known as an effective and inconspicuous poison to men or women who wanted to rid themselves unobtrusively of some inconvenient member of their family or a troublesome enemy.

In 367 B.C., for instance, Dionysius, who had been the tyrant of Syracuse, died of what was obviously opium poisoning. According to the historian Cornelius Nepos, Dionysius's son, who was later known as Dionysius the Younger, forced the Court physicians to give his father an overdose of poppy juice. *Patri soporem medicos*

*dare coegit.* And there is no doubt that the poison administered was opium, for we are expressly told that Dionysius "died as though he had slept himself to death."

It is claimed by many authorities that the poison which Hannibal kept for so long in his large ring, and with which he finally committed suicide at the end of his career in Libyssa in 183 B.C. was an opiate of some sort. And years before that, when Hannibal was setting out for Rome during the second Punic War, and Juno did not want him to go, she tried to make him sleep too soundly to leave. Silius, in his *De Bello Punico* has her exclaim:

"Per tenebras portas medicata papavera cornu  
. . . quatit inde Soporis

Devero capiti pennas, oculisque quietem  
Irrorat tangens Lethaea tempora virga."

In the year 55 of our own era, young fourteen year old Britannicus, the son of the Emperor Claudius and his third wife Messalina, was poisoned with opium by Agrippina, Claudius's new wife, who wanted to remove the lad in favour of Nero. She mixed a deadly amount of opium with Britannicus's wine one evening, and Nero began his devastating career.

It would be unfair to people who lived in antiquity to assume that the various misuses of opium went on unnoticed by them. Many of them were as shocked by such poisonings and by the opium habit as are thoughtful men and women of our own age: In fact, judging, for instance, by the casualties in the last War, human life was considered more sacred in antiquity than it is to-day.

And there were reformers in Ancient Greece who warned their compatriots to be careful of opium. In the third century B.C., Diagoras of Melos, and in the fifth Eristatus, for instance, urged their patients to avoid the use of opium altogether and to bear pain rather than expose themselves to the possibility of becoming dependent on the drug.

Unfortunately the advice of such wise men has not always been followed. And it has been practically impossible to curtail the consumption of opium. For centuries the poppy juice has been a commodity of international trade. No individuals in any one country could do anything effectively to stop its sale. Always there have been other individuals or groups of individuals, who acquired wealth by spreading the drug-taking habit, and when one comes down to essential facts in a study of world history, money, as well as a desire for power, has been responsible for the progress or the retrogression of mankind.

# 2

THROUGHOUT the ages the anxiety felt by conscientious physicians about the abuse of opium has had little social effect. By not giving the drug to patients who might contract the habit, doctors have undoubtedly been able to protect many individuals, but they have never been in a sufficiently strong position to prevent people who wished to do so from getting and taking the drug.

For in no district or country cultivating or importing opium in any large quantities have these supplies been confined to the locked and guarded pharmaceutical chests of medical men or apothecaries.

In Eastern countries, where poppies have been grown in abundance for centuries, anyone walking through the poppy fields when the capsules are ready for incision, can help himself to the juice. It can be mixed at once in a casual drink of water from a spring or a well, or collected in a cup and taken home. When the juice has dried it can be rolled into balls or pellets or cakes

to be eaten or stored away with other domestic supplies.

Most probably, in the age of barter, before coins were in use, opium was thus exchanged for some other household commodity. Neighbourly men and women everywhere have always carried on such informal trade. When this happened, opium had actually become an article of commerce, though this primitive exchange of goods was not known or considered as such.

The Arabs were the first to organize the cultivation of and the trade in opium. In their assiduous researches into the works of the great Greek physicians, Arab doctors had studied all there was to learn at the time about the medicinal use of opium. They spread this knowledge to other countries of the East.

Rhazes, for instance, one of the most distinguished doctors of his age, who died in A.D. 923, made his permanent home in Bagdad, but he travelled in Africa, the Holy Land and Spain, imparting his knowledge of drugs to his colleagues in these foreign countries. Avicenna, who lived a hundred years later, and who is famous for his *Canon*, is said to have been an opium addict himself. He died when he was fifty-eight; too much wine and too much opium were believed to have been responsible for his early death.

To the Arabs, opium was known as *Ufian* or *Asiun*, or more usually *Af-yun*, which means medicine, but its consumption was not confined to the sick. Sophisticated Arabs were familiar with the stimulating and the soporific effects of the drug, and it was taken freely by many.

Very early, too, the Arabs recognized opium as an ideal merchandise. It was as small in bulk as their other exports, such as spices, precious stones, sweet-smelling incense or camphor. Opium, like these other goods, could be carried easily across the desert on the backs of camels, and relatively small quantities fetched high prices, once the foreign buyer, or his customers, had acquired the habit.

In the sixth century, the Arabs introduced opium and the cultivation of the poppy into Persia, India and China. When the Arabs penetrated into the Eastern Roman Empire, into Egypt, North Africa and Spain—until their progress was finally stopped at the Battle of Tours in 723—they took opium with them. And during the Mohammedan conquests of the tenth and eleventh centuries, opium was shipped by the Arabs to all parts of the known world. The prophet Mohammed did not allow his disciples to drink alcohol, and this prohibition created a demand for other stimulants wherever Islam was preached. Opium had become a commercial product.

Doctors were given less and less authority concerning the distribution of opium. They could now lament the evil effects on large sections of a population, but they could do nothing to stop its unlimited sale on the open market. For as early as the eighth century, pharmacology was officially separated from medicine in Arabia. Physicians no longer monopolized the medicine chests.

Apothecaries, not always men as scrupulous as physicians, were beginning to come into their own. Dispensaries were established in the large cities under Arab rule, and doctors no longer controlled the medical



From an old pamphlet published by the  
Society for the Suppression of Opium Trade

*The opium smoker's wife is desperate and breaks his pipe*



supply of opium. They were allowed to continue their researches into the efficaciousness of opium, but by the beginning of the Middle Ages, merchants dominated the cultivation, the supply and the demand of the poppy and its precious juice.

Opium was now a most important product of world trade. With the spices of Arabia, with precious stones, opium in fact created a new world trade. Many of the Crusaders must have thought of the profits to be made from opium, as well as of the Holy Sepulchre. For the West, in order to acquire spices and opium, began to discover trade routes, and one of the commodities which Columbus set out to find in India was opium. Commercial interests were the chief impulse behind all the great journeys of exploration. The fall of Constantinople in 1453 had dislocated the Eastern trade. Prices rose and the time had come for the West to do something about it.

The rich people of Europe could no longer live in the comfort they demanded without the products of the East. Their meals were dull and tasteless without pepper or musk or cinnamon. "Torrents of blood were shed over the apparently inoffensive clove," and in the eleventh century one kernel of pepper was literally worth almost its weight in silver. Fashionable women could not imagine existence without sweet-smelling rose oil and other scents from Arabia. The words "the spice of life" were more than an empty phrase. Spices and drugs became products of prime necessity. The civilized West could not get on without the superficial smoothness accorded life by the East.

Opium was one of the most urgently required Eastern products, for Europeans had learned about the miraculous effects of the "drug of forgetfulness." Besides, with the help of this drug, they could when they were ill, for a time, at least, dispense with pain. And no effect was too great to get plenty of these pain-killing drugs in the apothecaries' stores or in the home.

Eastern caravan routes, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, were hazardous and slow. Often brigands attacked them in the desert and entire shipments were stolen. The huge expenses connected with each caravan decreased the profits of the ultimate European importer. So explorers set out in ships, to find a shorter route to the Eastern bases of supply. In 1496 Cabot tried to find the North-West passage to India. Vasco da Gama sailed round Cape Horn in 1497, and arrived with his vessels in Calicut; Magellan, who died in 1521, was the first navigator to cross the Indian Ocean; Columbus discovered America in 1492. Opium was one of the seven or eight chief products which inspired these explorers.

In the countries they visited during their chief journeys of exploration they investigated the cultivation of opium. Barbosa, a relative of Magellan, wrote in 1516: "The Chinese are also great navigators . . . they travel with all their goods to Malacca. For the return voyage they ship drugs of Cambay, much *afiam*, which we call opium, wormwood, saffron, etc." Barbosa also mentions that the opium from Aden was higher priced than the Malwa product.

Naturally the spice and opium trade which developed

before and during this period of exploration caused great and bitter rivalry amongst European nations. This struggle for the trade in spices and drugs was in effect a struggle for European naval supremacy. From the ninth to early in the fifteenth centuries the Venetians were supreme. They sailed from South Western Europe to the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. Then, from Aden to Malacca their goods were shipped by Arab merchants and from Malacca onwards by Chinese traders.

The Venetian supremacy really ended on the day on which Vasco da Gama sailed into Calicut. The Portuguese had captured the high seas. The control of the opium trade was handed from one seafaring nation to another. The Dutch, in turn, controlled the distribution of opium when they succeeded the Portuguese, and when, in the seventeenth century the English finally superseded the Dutch, a new chapter in the history of opium had begun, and the opium trade in turn helped to create a new chapter in English history, for it was an important factor in the moulding of colonial policy.

After the great explorers had opened up the new routes to the East, opium was no longer an Oriental mystery. By the companies of Merchant Adventurers, organized in the fifteenth century, opium was transported all over the world. In the sixteenth century, these Merchant Adventurers were followed by the so-called chartered shipping companies. Some of them, like the *Turkey Company*, founded in 1581, brought opium to England, where a part of their shipments remained,

while other consignments were carried by the *Eastland* or other Companies to the Baltic countries, to Scandinavia or the Continent.

All over Europe opium was now a familiar product. Everywhere it was welcomed as a great medicine, but in many countries it was acquiring a relentless hold over many men and women. When their medicine chests were well stocked with opium, and more could easily be purchased at any time, wealthy people ceased to be so careful of their supplies. They began to wonder what else could be done with this precious stimulant.

Gourmets were no longer satisfied merely with the effects of opium; they wanted to make it pleasing to the taste as well. Kaempfer, the famous German explorer, who had learned about opium in Persia in 1687, brought back to Europe several recipes for its preparation. He told his fellow-Europeans that in Persia opium was eaten as a delicacy. It was flavoured with nutmeg, cardamom, cinnamon or mace, or was "simply served" with saffron or ambergris. In Persia these concoctions were called *Theriaka*.

Pierre Belon, the French naturalist, who travelled extensively in the Orient a century before Kaempfer to study Eastern drugs and medicines, was struck by the general cultivation and use of opium which already existed at this time. He particularly drew the attention of his European colleagues to the frightening spread of opium in Turkey:

"There is no Turk," Belon wrote, "who would not buy opium with his last penny. He carries it on him in war and in peace. They eat opium because they think that

they thus become more daring and have less fear of the dangers of war."

Prospero Alpino, a little later in the same century, investigated Egyptian *materia medica*, and was appalled by the quantities of opium which hardened Egyptian *habitués* of the drug could take. He reported that he had actually seen Egyptians who could consume twelve grams in one day without being ill or dying. He described some of the tragic cases he had seen:

"Their bodies lose their energy; their functions deteriorate; moreover they seem inebriate and almost benumbed all the while and are considered fickle by everyone, because at one moment they affirm a thing and the next they deny it, and so conduct themselves that people almost dread to associate with them or to transact serious business."

Acosta, a Portuguese doctor, writing in 1655, after a journey in the East, was equally horrified. "Though opium is condemned by reason," he wrote, "it is used so extensively that it is the most general and familiar remedy of degraded *débauchés*. . . . Such is the opinion not only of all the followers of our medical system, but also of the Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Coringa (Madras Coast), Malay, Chinese and Malabar doctors. The worst of it is that once it has become a habit, they cannot give up their liking for it without great risk of life."

Not all physicians were now equally repelled by the havoc opium was creating among growing sections of the population. Outbursts like Acosta's on the part of the medical profession became rarer. The world seemed to be growing accustomed to opium, and when one studies

the medical records of these centuries one feels that doctors began to accept the bad effects of the drug as an inevitable evil. At any rate, they obviously tried to make themselves concentrate their minds on the remarkable and undeniable therapeutic benefits to be derived from a proper application of the drug.

In this connection one should never forget how great indeed were these benefits. For apart from killing pain and lessening the nervous strain on a patient, inducing sleep, or making bearable the last hours or days and nights of a human being who was incurably ill, opium performed another great function in the days before anæsthetics of any kind had been discovered.

As early as the thirteenth century two monastic physicians, father and son, Hugo of Lucca and Theoderic of Cervia had devised a "sleeping sponge" a *spongia somnifera*, which was held to the patient's nose before an operation. This sponge was saturated with opium, mandragora and other soporific plants. Then it was dried in the sun, so that it could be moistened with warm water and used again at any moment when a major operation was to be performed.

When one considers this as well as the other uses to which opium could be put by physicians, it is not really surprising that as time passed they paid less attention to the dangers of the drug.

Paracelsus, that great though erratic German physician who died in 1541, and whose career was as explosive and as arrogant as his real name: Phillipus Aureolus Theophrastus Paracelsus Bombastus von Hohenheim, always carried opium in the medicine bag hanging from

the saddle of his horse. And he called the drug "the stone of immortality."

It is said that Paracelsus himself took opium when the strain of life was too great, and this would explain the instability of his character, the apparent contradictions in his statements. At any rate, he once wrote: "I possess a secret remedy which I call laudanum and which is superior to all heroic remedies."

In the seventeenth century so distinguished a physician as Franciscus Sylvius declared that he would not wish to practise medicine without opium as a staple drug. And von Helmont, a Belgian doctor of the period, was giving so much opium to his patients, and taking it so freely himself, that he was known as *Doctor Opiatus*. Dr. Thomas Sydenham of Dorset, who fought in Cromwell's army when he was not devoting himself to the sick, declared that "without opium the healing art would cease to exist, and by its help a skilful physician is enabled to perform cures that seem almost miraculous."

One of Sydenham's pupils, Thomas Dover of Warwickshire, knew more about opium than his teacher, for he deserted medicine for several years and took up piracy as a profession. He was, as Professor Osler once wrote, "the Buccaneer, who for four years harassed the Coast of South America; thoroughness pervaded both his medicine and his piracy" and he left succeeding generations his famous "Dover's powder", a combination of opium and ipecacuanha.

One cannot really blame Thomas Dover for running away from medicine, at least for a time. When, as a student, he lived in Sydenham's house, he was taken

seriously ill with small-pox. The month was January, but Sydenham, who was known for his gentle treatment of patients, must have thought that young Dover was very tough indeed. Dover went through a Spartan cure which he never forgot and later recorded.

“First,” Thomas Dover recorded years later, “I was bled to the extent of twenty-two ounces. Then an emetic. I had no fire allowed in my room, my windows were constantly open, my bedclothes were ordered to be laid no higher than my waist. He (Sydenham) made me take twelve bottles of small beer acidulated with spirit of vitriol, every twenty-four hours.”

When Dover recovered he left Sydenham’s house in Wyndford Eagle in Dorset, bought a share in a ship called the *Duke*, which was owned by the Merchant Adventurers of Bristol, and sailed for climates warmer than Dorset was in the winter.

On his journeys he studied *materia medica* at first hand. He watched the results carefully when he prescribed opium to the sailors on his ship. And in common with many physicians who learn a great deal about any drug or any disease, he was conservative in prescribing opium.

In his famous *Ancient Physician’s Legacy to his Country*, which was first published in 1732, Thomas Dover wrote down the various opium mixtures he had found useful during his varied career. Opium is not indiscriminately included in these prescriptions. When used in cases of epilepsy, for instance, he definitely warns his fellow doctors against it.

“Opiates,” he wrote, “only palliate and at the same time give deeper root to the disease.”

It was in connection with the treatment of gout and arthritis that Thomas Dover made up the prescription which still bears his name. This was the original "Dover's powder" as prescribed by him in his *Legacy*:

"Take of opium one ounce, saltpetre and tartar vitriolated, each four ounces; Ippacuana one ounce; liquorish one ounce. Put the saltpetre and tartar into a redhot mortar, stirring them with a spoon until they have done flaming. Then powder them very fine, after that slice in your opium; grinding these to powder, and then mixing the other powder with these. Dose from forty to sixty or seventy grains in a glass of white wine posset, going to bed. Cover up warm, and drinking a quart or three pints of the Posset drink while sweating."

Though Thomas Dover's opium prescription survived others made up at the time, many doctors living in the later part of the eighteenth century mixed opium in some form or other for their patients. And, of course, quacks used it, too. It was gradually recommended for the various stages of many diseases.

"Opium," wrote Monsieur Pomet, who had been Louis XIV's "druggist," "is a narcotick, a hypnotick and anodyne; it composes the Hurry of the Spirits, causes Rest and insensibility, is comfortable and refreshing in great Watchings and strong Pains; provokes Sweat powerfully; helps most diseases of the Breasts and Lungs; as Coughs, Colds, Catarrhs and Hoarseness; prevents or allays spitting of Blood, Vomiting and Lacks of the Bowels, is special in Cholick, Pleurisis and hysterick cases."

Conservative physicians recommended caution. In Doctor John Hill's famous *Family Herbal*, for instance,

he is sceptical about the efficacy of opium against bites of mad dogs.

"The present practice," he writes, "depends upon Opium and bleeding for the cure of the bite of a mad dog; but it is not easy to say, that any person ever was cured, who became thoroughly distempered from the bite. One of the strongest instances we have known was in a person in St. George's Hospital under the care of Dr. Hoadly, there was an appearance of the symptoms and the cure was effected by this method."

Whether or not, however, physicians and quacks recommended opium whenever they did not know what else to give their patients, medical men, as well as laymen in the eighteenth century, were becoming more discriminating about opium, and what was more important from a hygienic point of view, was that people began to want their opium to be properly cleansed.

Monsieur Pomet, who though he may have exaggerated the power of opium as a cure for many diseases, made a thorough study of the poppy and its products, recorded the increasing fussiness about opium:

"The most esteemed opium," he wrote, "is that of Thebes, which is brought from Aleppo and Smyrna in Turkey wrapped up in leaves; the other, from Persia and Surat and the East Indies, being far inferior to the Theban or Turkey sort of opium; not having so strong a smell, nor being so clean. . . . Authors mention three sorts of opium; as

"First, the pure from Cairo or Thebes. Secondly the black and hard from Aden. Thirdly, the yellow and softer sort from Cambaia and Decam in the East Indies."

"Yet we generally at this time, reckon but two sorts viz.; "First the Turkey or Theban, which is weighty, of a good consistence, thick, and more solid than the Indian; of a lively fresh reddish colour, almost like fresh aloes, of a strong poppy scent, of an acrid bitter taste, that will burn and flame; soft, easy to cut, and be dissolved in either water, wine or spirit of wine, and is pretty clean from Dirt, Excrements and Filth.

"Secondly: the Indian opium, which is softer, yellower, lighter, not of so good a body, and much fouler, being in every respect inferior to the former."

From a scientific point of view, this mention of dissolving opium in wine is important. Chemists and physicians already felt that if they could get at the basic substance of opium, if they could eliminate that part of the juice which was ineffectual, the strength of the drug would be immeasurably increased. "Extracts of opium made by water or spirit of wine" are frequently mentioned late in the eighteenth century.

Medical men were also searching for a way of administering opium, and other drugs, which would eliminate the digestive process. Pomet, for instance, mentions that "given in clysters opium operates quicker than when taken at the mouth."

The medical profession, in other words, was getting closer to the discovery of the alkaloids, that is to say the chemically organic base of opium. They were also approaching the idea of subcutaneous injections, though these could not become reality until the hypodermic syringe was invented in 1853 by Dr. Alexander Wood of Edinburgh.

This progress in the scientific attitude towards opium is the more striking when one considers that at the same time, in the second half of the eighteenth century, the social outlook, especially in China, was blacker than it had ever been before and opium had become a destructive force wrecking the lives of thousands of human beings.

FOR the last two hundred years, the problem of opium has been centred in China. China has undoubtedly suffered more acutely from the effects of the drug on her population than has any other country, and Western countries have been largely or wholly responsible for the spread of opium in China.

Many Westerners have tried to allege that China was swarming with addicts before Europeans took a hand in the opium trade. For even the most hard-headed men seem to have a conscience somewhere, and they have not liked to be reminded of their share in the Chinese Opium traffic.

Frequent attempts have been made in the last two centuries to blur the facts and to paint a picture in which China consumed vast quantities of opium before the trade was organized by Europeans in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Actually this was not the case. One need only recall the Duke of Chow's manifesto

against drunkenness, issued in 1115 B.C., to realize the natural temperance of the Chinese.

Joseph Rowntree, in his book on the *Imperial Drug Trade*, published in 1905, summed up the situation well when he wrote that "it is quite clear that opium has long been known in China as a medicine, and that the poppy has been used there, as it is in India, as a vegetable. It is probable that there grew up in some districts (of China) a demand for the drug for vicious purposes also. But it is practically certain, from the absence of all mention of any opium habit by the Jesuit missionaries, by travellers, and in the Chinese records, that there was no general consumption of opium before the introduction of opium smoking."

Until early in the nineteenth century the cultivation of opium was extremely limited in China, but this is only natural, of course, as powerful Western merchants found the export of opium to China so profitable that any domestic cultivation was discouraged. At any rate, Dr. Clarke Abel, the naturalist with Lord Amherst's Embassy, who made a thorough and extensive study of the crops and plants of China in 1816, does not include the poppy plant in his report.

Opium was originally exported to China by the Arabs, probably in the eighth century. At first the drug was used by the Chinese purely as a medicine. It is mentioned as *Ying-tzu-su* in a Chinese medical book, the *K'ai-pao-pen-tsao*, which was published in 973. Opium must also have been used as an occasional stimulant, for a poppy drink is referred to during the same period in a poem by Sy Tung-P'a.

There are records showing that by the beginning of the twelfth century the dried poppy juice was sometimes made up into cakes and eaten as a great delicacy by the Chinese, but the use of the drug except as a medicine was not yet general. The *Introduction to Medicine*, written by Li Ting in the sixteenth century, includes an account of how *afuyung* should be prepared. It is interesting that at this relatively late date the Arabic word should still have persisted in China.

Opium became more popular in the seventeenth century, and it is generally assumed that it was then that opium smoking began in China. It is said that Dutch traders, who imported raw Indian opium to Java and then exported considerable quantities to China, first introduced the habit of smoking opium to the Chinese.

This seems very probable, but it is strange that the first authentic report of opium smoking should not have been written until the middle of the eighteenth century, when a Government investigator, Huang Yu-pu was sent from Pekin to study conditions on the island of Formosa. Huang Yu-pu was struck by this smoking of opium; one has the impression that he had not seen opium smoked in this manner before. Huang Yu-pu published his observations in 1746:

"Opium for smoking," he wrote, "is prepared by mixing hemp and the grass cloth plant with opium, and cutting them up small. This mixture is boiled with water, and the preparation mixed with tobacco. A bamboo tube is also provided, the end of which is filled with coir fibres. Many persons collect the opium to smoke it mixed with tobacco alone. Those who make it their

sole business to prepare opium in this way are known as opium tavern-keepers. Those who smoke once or twice form a habit which cannot be broken off. The aborigines smoke as an aid to vice. The limbs grow thin and appear to be wasting away; the internal organs collapse. The smoker, unless he be killed, will not cease smoking. The local officers have from time to time strictly prohibited the habit. It has often been found that when the time came for administering the bastinado to culprits of this class, they would beg for a brief respite that they might first take another smoke. Opium comes from Java."

As this reference to punishments for the purveyors of opium shows, the smoking of the drug was already forbidden in China at this time. Early in the century the Portuguese had begun to export larger quantities into China. Though the amount was relatively small—in 1729 only 200 chests were imported—the authorities had already become exceedingly anxious. China's valiant fight against opium had begun.

By an Edict, published in 1729, Emperor Yung Ching prohibited the domestic sale and the smoking of opium. Imports, however, were not mentioned in this regulation.

"The sellers of opium," this Edict of 1729 read in no uncertain terms, "were to bear the wooden collar for a month, and be banished to the frontier. The keepers of opium shops were to be punished in the same way as the propagators of depraved doctrines—they were to be strangled. Their assistants—after a few months' imprisonment—were to be beaten with a hundred blows, and banished to a distance of 1,000

miles." Yung Ching was obviously determined to destroy the entire network of the opium traffic, for "boatmen, neighbours lending help, soldiers, police-runners" anyone, in fact, in any way connected with the trade was to be severely punished. Customs house officials, too, were to be penalized even for carelessness.

The Emperor's attitude towards the traffic in opium was most clearly shown by the last clause in his decree, which showed that his anger was chiefly directed against those men who were accumulating wealth at the expense of the simple people to whom they had sold the drug and thus made them dependent on it. The last clause in this Edict expressly stated that "only the smoker himself was to be exempt from punishment."

In the long run, however, neither the Emperor's severity, nor his humanity, could stop opium from pouring into China. Always, since the trade in opium started, those distributing it have known how to evade the law. And at the time when Yung Ching published this first Edict, European merchants were already too much involved, too much capital was at stake, for them to take any notice of China's Emperor or her people. After the Edict, these European traders reorganized their opium business, that was all; they were forced to trade stealthily. Their risks were greater, too, but this was not serious as higher prices could always be asked of the consumer, who, when once he had formed the opium habit, paid exorbitant prices to satisfy his needs.

• • • • •

While the Dutch, and after them the Portuguese,

dominated the sea route to India, they controlled the trade in opium, but the British began to make their influence felt as early as the seventeenth century. Sir James Lancaster, the first English navigator to sail by way of the Cape to the Indies, had interested Queen Elizabeth in the Eastern trade.

In 1600 the Dutch, beginning to fear England's rivalry had established a "pepper pool" fixing high prices for pepper, opium and other Indian products. This made English merchants realize that they, too, must organize. Solitary merchant adventurers could no longer compete with the Dutch, and individual traders could not risk sending out ships to India.

As a result, in December, 1600, the English East India Company was founded by Royal Charter. This Company was granted a monopoly of the trade with countries "beyond the Cape of Good Hope or the Magellan Straits." The cultivation and the distribution of opium, which had been a monopoly of the Great Mogul and of native princes, was gradually wrested from them by the East India Company after the rivalry of the Dutch had been overcome.

For three years after 1714, the native ruler of Calicut had been at war with the Dutch. As the arms of the Dutch were superior, the natives were of course, defeated. Huge indemnities, including seven per cent of all the pepper exported from the district were demanded of them and the Indian ruler of Calicut lost control of the opium trade.

A Captain Hamilton, who lived in India for forty years during the first half of the eighteenth century, and who

commented rather cynically on the growth of the English East India Company, was fully aware that opium had been one of the most important issues of this Dutch-Calicut war. Hamilton wrote:

“Whether our English East India Company got or lost by that War, I know not; nor will I pretend to pass judgment on their affairs, but this I know: that the chief lost a good milch cow; for the chiefs of Calicut had vended between five hundred and a thousand chests of Bengal opium yearly up in the inland countries where it was very much used; the water carriage up the river bed was cheap and secure, the price of opium high, and the price of pepper low, so that the profits were great both ways; for, if I mistake not, the Company paid the highest price for their pepper, and by the unexpected turn of affairs caused by the War, that trade is fallen entirely into the Dutch Company’s hands, and it will be a very difficult task to get it out again.”

As the British domination in India grew, and the English East India Company superseded the Dutch, the production of opium was encouraged by the English as, both from the point of view of sales and of barter with the natives, it was one of the most promising commodities on the East India Company’s list of products.

The English East India Company developed rapidly. During the reign of Charles II it was given the right to “acquire territory, coin money, form alliances, make war and control civil and criminal jurisdiction.” During the eighteenth century, when the Mogul Empire was breaking up, the East India Company was fast becoming a political as well as a commercial force. In 1740 it

had a capital of three million pounds on which a dividend of seven per cent was paid to shareholders, and at the battle of Plassy in 1757 Clive backed up this financial strength with a great military victory.

The Crown was increasingly interested in the East India Company, and when, in 1773, Warren Hastings was appointed as director of the Company, he was called a "Governor General," and it was decided that in the future such appointments should always be "subject to the Crown's approval."

In 1786 the East India Company controlled Bengal, Bihar, Chittagong, as well as Benares in the Ganges valley; the Company practically owned the Circars on the Coromandel Coast, Madras and a small area in the Carnatic. Bombay had been leased to the Company in 1680 by Charles II, who had received this district as part of his dowry when he married Catherine of Braganza.

From the point of view of opium, Bengal was the most important district under the control of the East India Company. At the time, a number of Indian States not yet under the domination of the Company grew opium as well. This native opium was called Malwa opium, while that cultivated by the Company was known as Bengal opium.

In the early days of the East India Company, however, the opium trade had been carried on privately by the employees of the Company. The Company paid such low wages that their staff in India was virtually dependent on private business transactions for a livelihood. The higher grades of employees, men who were in strong

positions, were able to amass fortunes by bribing the natives, or by extortions, as well as by trade. As an observer said, "they found a compensation for the scanty allowance made them by their masters in England," and opium was one of the most important sources of their private wealth.

There is a passage in *Robinson Crusoe* which shows that men like Defoe, who were familiar with the docks of London, and often talked to seamen returning from the East, knew all about these private gains.

"I observe," wrote Defoe in *Robinson Crusoe*, which was first published in 1719, "that our people in England often admire how the officers which the Company send into India, and the merchants, which generally stay there, get such very great estates as they do, and sometimes come home with sixty or seventy thousand pounds at a time."

Soon the London directors of the East India Company, and the shareholders living peacefully in some quiet country home in England, learned with resentment that the Company's employees in the East were making money on opium. The shareholders pointed out to the directors that opium was too profitable a commodity to remain outside the Company's control.

Individual employees, who for years had quietly increased their income by trading in opium, were severely scolded. A dispatch in the 1703 *Annals* of the East India Company reflects the growing agitation. This dispatch from the Company's agent at Borneo, sounds as though it had been written by an embittered man who arrived at his post too late to share his colleagues' opium profits.

"Indian produce," this dispatch reads, "must be sent on the Company's account only, and not on that of their individual servants in India; the market for opium, for instance, having this year (1703) been totally engrossed, and a sufficient quantity for twelve months brought by a vessel, which had arrived under Sir Edward Littleton's pass from Bengal."

The centre of the opium trade, controlled privately by the servants of the Company, was at Patna, where a factory had been established. Captain Hamilton had something to say about the opium activities round Patna.

He described the district as "frequented by Europeans, where the Dutch and English have factories. It produces so much opium that it serves all the countries in India with that commodity. The discovery of this 'beneficial trade' is ascribed to a Mr. Lucas, a factor in the Company's service at Malacca, who was advised by a Malay to send some *surat Bastaes* dyed blue and some *berams* dyed red, which are both coarse cotton cloth much worn in the country; and opium is as much in request as tea is with us. In the ten years that he (Mr. Lucas) kept the trade wholly to himself, though in other men's names, he got an estate of ten or twelve tons of gold, or about £100,000, and then revealed the secret to the Company, who took the trade altogether into their own hands."

It would be interesting to know why Mr. Lucas "revealed his secret" to the Company. Perhaps Captain Hamilton was being courteous to Mr. Lucas, perhaps this was merely a polite way of saying that Mr. Lucas had been found out. At any rate, the East India Company

assumed complete control of the Patna factories, and punished any of its servants who infringed these jealously guarded rights. These punishments consisted of "confiscation, fines, or imprisonment."

"All Government officials," as F. S. Turner wrote in 1876, "police, native watchmen, and even the native land owners were obliged to assist in protecting the monopoly. The Company did not, however, engage directly in the cultivation. This was left to the *ryots*, or farmers. The Company's portion of the actual business consisted in inspecting the land offered for poppy cultivation, making advances of money to the *ryot*, to whom a licence for cultivating so much land was granted; receiving and examining, packing and storing, the opium brought in; retailing it to the licensed vendors in Bengal, selling it wholesale for exportation to Calcutta. Not an acre of land could be sown with poppy seed, without licence from the Company's agent. Not a pound of opium in all Bengal but must be delivered to the Company's depot before it could become an article of merchandise. The Company, therefore, were gigantic capitalists, doing business wholesale and retail on an immense scale, without any rivals, and engrossing the whole of the production and sale. The price for home consumption was about three times the cost of production. The opium for export, the great bulk of the trade, was sold by auction in Calcutta, realizing generally about four times the cost of production."

Naturally, in view of these tremendous profits, the East India Company wanted to have as much land under poppy cultivation as possible. As a result, the representa-

tives of the Company met with bitter antagonism from the natives, who were frequently forced to plant poppy instead of food crops. It is stated that once, in fact, during a famine in Bengal, when the shortage of food was terrible, 'several of the poorer farmers were compelled to plough up the fields they had sown with grain, in order to plant them with poppies, for the benefit of the engrossers of opium.'

Under Warren Hastings' administration, native contractors had little chance of avoiding the pressure which was thus brought to bear on the small native producer, for the opium contracts also stipulated a penalty of 300 rupees for every chest lacking in the total number required by the contract. In 1775 Cornwallis gave a certain relief to native contractors by excusing them from this fine of 300 rupees, if they could prove that "natural calamities" had made it impossible for them to deliver the full number of chests.

During the first few years of this intensive opium cultivation, the East India Company concentrated on the profits derived from it, and did not consider the effects of the drug on the Indian consumers. Then, gradually, another factor made itself felt. The officers of the East India Company realized that the spread of opium in India considerably decreased the efficiency of native labour. Opium was a boomerang which was a danger to the Company.

There were obviously two ways to counteract this evil effect of opium in the domains of the East India Company. One was to decrease the amount sold in India and yet raise the price, so that the revenue would

not suffer more than was absolutely inevitable. The other was to export the vast surplus to some other country, where the Company was not dependent on native labour and it did not matter, from a financial point of view, whether the population was demoralized by opium or not.

As Turner so well expressed it, "the East India Company's opium policy may be expressed in two words: repression and revenue; at home repression, revenue from abroad." Later, after the China trade was firmly established, local tax collectors in India were instructed "to the utmost extent of their means to discourage the sale and consumption of the drug except for medical purposes."

The reports and statements of the members of the Company at this time are cynical reading. Warren Hastings declared:

"Opium is not a necessary of life, but a pernicious article of luxury, which ought not to be permitted but for the purpose of foreign commerce only, and which the wisdom of the Government should carefully restrain from internal consumption."

Some years later (1813) when opium with spirits was placed under excise duty, the East India Company's Court of Directors, who always approached the subject of opium more carefully and more delicately than did their representatives in India, issued a statement with regard to opium which was obviously intended for English readers who did not know India.

"It is our wish," this statement said, "not to encourage the consumption of opium, but rather to lessen the

use, or more properly speaking, the abuse of the drug; and for this end, as well as for the purpose of the revenue, to make a price to the public, both in our own and in foreign dominions, as high as possible. . . . Were it possible to prevent the use of the drug altogether, except strictly for the purpose of medicine, we would gladly do it in compassion of mankind."

This was written many years after the necessary foreign market for opium had been found and developed. Before Warren Hastings organized the opium cultivation in India, small quantities had been exported to China by the East India Company, but most of the surplus of the crop, which was still relatively unimportant, was sold to Dutch merchants at Batavia.

Even at this early stage, the Chinese Edicts against the smoking of opium made this illicit trade extremely dangerous. The English had opened up a trading centre in Canton in 1689, when the *Defense* entered the West River and anchored at Whampoa. And the generations of English merchants who had lived in Canton since, knew China well. In 1733, Mr. Whinchcott, the head of the Company's Council of supercargoes in Canton, began to be very much worried about the opium situation. He was afraid that some of the Company's vessels might be captured by the Chinese for having opium on board. On June 16th, 1733, he wrote to the commanders of two of the Company's ships, Captains Lyells and Holmes (Mr. Whinchcott's spelling has been retained).

"It having been the usual thing heretofore," Mr. Whinchcott wrote, "for shipps bound from Fort St. George, to carry opium with them for sale in China, and

not knowing but that there might be some of that commodity now on board your ship designed for the same markett, we think it our duty (lest you should be a stranger to itt) to acquaint you with the late severe laws enacted by the Emperor of China for ye prohibition of Ophium, the penalty should any be seized on board your ship, being no less than ye confiscation of ship and cargoes to the Emperor, as well as death to the person who should dare offer to buy it of you; upon these considerations therefore, and the more effectually to prevent any such like misfortune attending of us, you are hereby required to take the best measures you possibly can, by a strict enquiry and search in your ship, to be well informed whether there be any such thing on board or not, and in case there be, that you then take effectual care to have it removed out of your ship before you leave Malacca, since upon no consideration whatsoever, you are neither to carry, nor suffer any of it to be carry'd in your ship to China, as you will answer the contrary to the Honurable Company at your peril."

Most of the Directors and many of the Captains of the Honourable Company were less nervous than Mr. Whinchcott, and this casual, illegal trade continued for many years. It was, however, finally made virtually impossible by the Anglo-Dutch War of 1781, and as by that time the new Opium Monopoly had greatly increased India's production of opium, the need to find new foreign markets was urgent.

China had seemed to many men connected with the East India Company as the obvious market for the increasing surplus. It is not known whether or not

Warren Hastings had China in mind when he spoke of the necessary "foreign commerce"; but he and other responsible officers of the Company were obviously interested when this Chinese trade was originally discussed.

It appears that a Mr. Watson was the first to lay before the Company plans for expanding the Chinese trade. When the representatives of the Company met in Calcutta in 1767, Mr. Watson brought up the subject. Before this time Portugal had exported the bulk of the two hundred chests imported by China. And this small amount was not Indian opium; it was originally imported by the Portuguese from Turkey.

Raw opium, as the East India Company realized, had great advantages as an export product. The demand increased automatically, for as men or women became addicts they could not do without the drug and it was not necessary for the exporter to expend any effort in keeping up the demand to meet the supply.

Naturally the trade to China was precarious, because the attitude of the Chinese Government towards the smoking of opium was growing increasingly severe. But the members of the East India Company were courageous Englishmen, who were willing to take risks, and if they did not succeed at once, they were willing to try again.

From 1767, when the Chinese opium trade was begun by the East India Company, until the early nineties, a number of attempts were made to ship opium into China, but many of these early ventures failed.

Ships carrying opium were frequently disguised. On

July 21st, 1782, for instance, the *Nonsuch* sailed with 1,601 chests of Patna opium on board. Warren Hastings had reported "that the *Nonsuch* will enter the river at China as an armed ship, and will not be reported as bearing a cargo of opium, that being a contraband trade."

So the *Nonsuch*, as H. B. Morse records, "copper sheathed, sailed according to orders round the eastern end of Java, thence to the coast of the Philippines, showing French colours; from the Philippines to Macao she was to fly the Spanish ensign and pennant."

These early ventures in secretly exporting opium to China were not entirely satisfactory. That same year, 1782, showed a particularly bad return. 3,450 chests were shipped and the fate of these shipments were typical of the Company's bad luck during the early days of this export trade.

The vessels carrying this consignment of 1782 were, of course, armed and a detachment of soldiers was billeted on every ship. But one of these boats was captured by the French, and much of the opium which finally reached China was wasted. For the East India Company's representative in Canton did not know how to distribute and sell it, because, of course, this could not be done legally. He had been instructed to "take his measures with the utmost caution," and he was not a man able to carry on a secret trade. The Company's loss for this particular shipment was estimated at £20,000.

Special opium clippers were then built for the illicit Chinese opium trade. They were well-armed boats, which could move swiftly into and out of harbours. For a short time, an attempt was made to sail these

clippers into the Portuguese harbour of Macao, where it was hoped to establish an opium base, but naturally these vessels were not popular with the Portuguese and this arrangement had to be abandoned.

Another plan had to be devised. No harbour in China was really safe. The idea of floating warehouses seemed to offer a solution. Such an opium depot was established on board two ships stationed outside Macao harbour. Later a large warehouse vessel was taken to the outskirts of Whampoa harbour, where this boat remained for more than a year selling out her cargo gradually. From these safe warehouses, the drug could more easily be smuggled into China.

For twenty-five years, Whampoa was the centre of the East India's opium trade to China. Often the warehouse ships were attacked by pirates, some of them were lost, but others were sent to replace them.

By the nineties, despite the many difficulties, the Chinese trade was firmly established. In 1790, imports from India had increased from the meagre 200 chests to 2,330 chests.

The English were not the only Westerners selling contraband opium in China, but they were, of course, the chief exporters of the drug, because they controlled the Indian supply. Other nationals had to limit their opium trading more or less to reselling opium, and the quantities they sent to China were, therefore, negligible, as compared with English shipments. To illustrate this point one can pick figures at random from comparative statistics. In 1818, for instance, Americans sold \$303,296 worth of opium to China; in the same year, English



Courtesy of Reginald A. Malby & Co.

*Opium Poppy*  
(*Papaver somniferum*)



sales amounted to \$1,648,500. As the English trade increased, this difference was even more marked. In 1833, from India \$12,185,100; from American sources \$258,700. The Americans conveyed chiefly Turkish opium direct from the Mediterranean to China, and though the quality of Turkish opium was not nearly as good as Indian, these American imports competed with British imports as early as the forties.

In 1799, a fresh Edict against opium was issued in China, and in this, the prohibition of importing the drug was definitely mentioned. This Edict, however, remained a pathetic gesture, for in every country during the century there were many underpaid customs and other officials willing, at a price, to circumvent the law. China was no exception; she, too, had corrupt officials.

This Edict of 1799 is interesting in that it shows the extent to which the opium habit was penetrating the Chinese people. The use of opium, this Edict reads "originally prevailed only among vagrants and disreputable persons, but has since extended itself to others, and even to students and officials; their inducement appears to be the power which this substance communicates to those who partake of it, of not closing their eyes for entire nights and spending them in gratification of impure and sensual desires, whereby their respective duties and occupations are neglected. . . . Foreigners obviously derive the most solid profits and advantages, but that our countrymen should blindly pursue this destructive and ensnaring vice is indeed odious and deplorable in the highest degree."

Even before this Edict was published, the profits to

the East India Company had been considerable, though compared with the figure for 1830, when the revenue from the Indian opium trade was almost a million pounds, it was relatively negligible. The profits to the Company were steadily increasing. A Parliamentary report of 1810 states that the revenue from the trade in opium in 1793 amounted to £250,000, and that in 1808-9 it had risen to £594,978.

The London Directors of the East India Company continued formally to disapprove or pretend to disapprove, of this illicit trade with China. They declared it to be "beneath the Company to be engaged in such clandestine trade." They emphasized that they were not responsible for the clippers which transported opium from the warehouse ships to the coast, the captains of these vessels were not the Company's employees. They pointed out that "whatever opium might be in demand by the Chinese, the quantity would readily find its way thither without the Company being exposed to the disgrace of being engaged in an illicit commerce."

After the Edict of 1799, as Joseph Rowntree says, "the illicit commerce continued for seventy-eight years on the same illicit footing." And this trade had the full sanction of the British Government. Never was the East India Company independent of Parliament. The Charter was frequently revised, and parliamentary committees inspected all the Company's affairs. The attitude of the Government throughout the earlier decades of the nineteenth century is reflected in the 1832 report of the Parliamentary Committee investigating the Indian situation.

"The monopoly of opium in Bengal," this report reads, "supplies the Government with a revenue amounting in sterling money to £981,293 per annum; and the duty which is thus imposed amounted to 301 $\frac{3}{4}$  per cent on the cost of the article. In the present state of the revenue of India, it does not appear advisable to abandon so important a source of revenue, a duty upon opium being a tax which falls principally upon the foreign consumer, and which appears upon the whole less liable to objection than any other which could be substituted."

# 4

At the time when the illicit trade in China was increasing with unprecedented rapidity, when the cultivation of the poppy was becoming an economic necessity to the budget of India, an analysis of opium was beginning to absorb scientists all over Europe. In their progress towards the truth about the chemical constitution of animal and plant substances, these pharmacists, chemists and physicians, had left behind the antiquated methods of dissolving opium in wine. They were consciously searching for the basic elements of drugs.

The nineteenth century brought revolutionary changes in scientific discoveries, in scientific outlook and methods. One of the great contributions of the century was the discovery of alkaloids, and some of the most important drugs available belong to the alkaloid group, which includes strychnine, cocaine, atropine, quinine and morphine.

The military and political upheavals which swept across

Europe at this time, the French Revolution, Napoleon's campaigns, Waterloo, seemed not to touch the work of these scientists. Their intellectual curiosity was intense, and their laboratories were peaceful havens of thought amongst the general unrest and upheaval.

It was typical of the age that though many scientists were increasingly interested in opium and were making chemical experiments with the poppy plant, these men were unaware of the work of their contemporaries. To-day men of science, in their regular journals and in the newspapers, are informed of their colleagues' investigations. At that time they did not usually hear about these other researches until after their own were completed.

Several men worked alone trying to learn more about the poppy plant and its peculiar juice. A growing concern about the chemical consistency of plants was in the air. Morphine and other alkaloids, in other words, were ready to be discovered. As early as 1786, in fact, an American, John Leigh of Virginia, had published an "Experimental inquiry into the properties of opium."

In 1803 a French pharmacist, Durosne, announced that he had found the basic salt, as he called it, of opium. This preparation, which he had extracted after laborious experiments, was commercially known as *Sel de Derosne* and was soon popular as a medicine. This preparation, as was later shown, was a mixture of various opium alkaloids, chiefly morphine and narcotine.

Durosne was not aware that his salt was a new chemical body with a definite chemical constitution. Séguin, another Frenchman, who described a crystalline substance which he had devised from the poppy juice, was

equally unaware of the trail he was unconsciously opening up.

A young German, Friedrich Wilhelm Adam Sertürner, who isolated morphine in 1803, the same year that Durosne made his discovery, is generally acknowledged as the discoverer not only of morphine but of alkaloids generally. Sertürner appreciated the importance of these isolated substances; he felt intuitively, long before the existence or action of alkaloids had been scientifically established, that they were responsible for the medical effects of the plants as a whole. Sertürner realized that his discovery "opened up a new and relatively unknown field of practical experiment."

"For it is to be hoped," he wrote, "that substances will be isolated from several other vegetable products, for instance, the so-called poisonous plants, and that the effects of these plants will be found to be united in these substances."

This was a revolutionary statement and it is the more remarkable, when one considers that Sertürner, a young pharmacist's assistant of twenty-one, without any scientific training, was working in a small pharmacy without adequate equipment.

Sertürner experimented with infinite patience. In his essays published later in the *Journal der Pharmacie*, he records fifty-seven experiments. In the first twenty, he was concerned with the "acid of poppy." He found that the extract of opium as a whole had a different effect on the blue pigments of plants than his poppy acid, and he therefore decided that there must be some other substance in the poppy acid which caused this difference.

He then investigated the precipitates of chlorates in an opium infusion, and concluded that this substance was an independent chemical element. In fact, and this must have been a most startling experience, when he gave animals opium after this mysterious substance had been removed from it, they showed none of the symptoms usual to animals or human beings who had taken opium. The opium without this substance was a neuter with no effect whatsoever.

When Sertürner then gave animals the substance itself, he found that the effect was about ten times as strong as that from opium as a whole. Sertürner therefore knew that what he had found was really the heart of opium. He described it as the "sleepmaking principle" of opium, the *Principium Somniferum*, and he gave it the more popular name of *Morphium* after the ancient God of Sleep.

For years Sertürner tried to perfect his discovery. In order to ascertain what quantities were necessary as a medicine he was courageous enough to experiment on himself. He experienced all the effects; the exhilaration, the dreamlike condition, the temporary optimism and the ghastly depression, the nausea and the pain which followed. And though he never underrated the outstanding medical importance of his discovery, he did not overlook the dangers which morphine would be to mankind.

"I consider it my duty," he once wrote, "to attract attention to the terrible effects of this new substance in order that calamity may be averted. . . ."

For a surprisingly long time, however, both the good

and the terrible influence of Sertürner's discovery remained practically unnoticed. He was a man without academic degrees or recognition; no one who heard reports of his work took the contribution of an insignificant chemist in a small German town very seriously. Finally, in 1817, Joseph Louis Gay-Lussac, that remarkable French chemist who grappled so firmly with practical as well as theoretical problems, drew the attention of the scientific world to Sertürner's contribution and the study of the alkaloids of opium began. Cocaine was found, and the importance of morphine generally understood.

Again Frenchmen did the most constructive work. Pierre Joseph Pelletier, who died in 1842, and Joseph Caventou, who lived until 1878, perfected the means of producing morphine. François Magendie, famous not only for his own achievements as the founder of modern experimental pharmacology, but because he was the teacher of the great Claude Bernard, finally introduced morphine as a medicine. The first alkaloid to become a recognized medicine, however, was strychnine, but morphine followed shortly after. Medically speaking, opium had come into its own. Morphine is about five or six times stronger than opium. One fourth of a grain of morphine has the pain-relieving force of one or one and a half grains of opium.

All outstanding discoveries in *materia medica* have brought tragedy as well as relief to humanity.

Morphine was more dangerous even than opium, not only because it was much stronger but because small though strong quantities could be easily transported

and as soon as the new drug was readily available many individuals misused it. The addiction which we now call morphinism did not, however, develop at once. At first, after Magendie added morphine to the list of medicines, it was frequently bought and used by unhappy people who wanted to commit suicide. It was known as a deadly poison when self-administered by laymen in large doses, and the idea of obtaining passing relief and exhilaration from it had not yet been understood by the general public.

The number of suicides from morphine, however, must have been distressingly large. In Balzac's *Comédie du Diable*, published in 1830, there occurs a passage which makes this very clear. When the devil gives the reasons why he has no leisure for his own amusement, he enumerates the causes for the tremendous increase in the population of hell. In this connection the devil discusses the human inventions which increase the death rate of people on earth, and he mentions morphine, as well as gunpowder and other destructive forces invented by man.

# 5

THE opium trade in the East was not affected as yet by the scientific work in the West, or by the discovery of morphine. And to many Europeans who ignored the human wreckage brought about by the spread of opium in China, the East India Company's smuggling trade, carried out during the first thirty or forty years of the nineteenth century, seemed very romantic. The dangers involved in this illicit trade made the captains of opium clippers appear as heroes, and the vast riches accumulated by the traders lent glamour to this traffic. Curious travellers from Europe who went to the East tried to see as much as they could of this secret trade.

One of them, a man named James Hilton, recorded his impressions in his *Travels in China* published in 1830.

“At half past one in the afternoon,” he wrote, “we anchored off the south-west side of the island of Lintin, where the foreign vessels engaged in the opium trade

remain stationed, and we found the following ships lying at anchor: the *Merope*, the *Parkyus*, the *Samaranny*, the *Grant*, the *James Crockett*, the *Jannisena*, the *Hector*; the American ships *Scattergood*, *Tartar*, *Linton*, *Margaret Forbes* and *Tierrier*; the Portuguese ships *Don Manual* and brig *Letitia*; the Danish brig *Dansborg* and the French ship *La Rose*. After breakfast, Captain Gove invited me to accompany him on a visit to some of the floating stores, which several of the vessels may justly be considered, as they remain in China all the year round to facilitate the importation of this article by receiving it from that class of vessel called runners. I examined specimens of the drug, made up into balls or cakes, and packed in cases; however the smugglers generally remove it from the ships in bags, in which it is more easily conveyed to the junks outside the port, and also for subsequent transportation by land. Their smuggling boats are of average length, and generally pull from forty to fifty oars. Their weapons of defence are usually one small carriage gun or swivel, with muskets, boarding spikes, swords and stones. Their boarding netting is similar to an ordinary fishing net, being intended merely to guard them against the stones. They have also shields for the same purpose. Not a ball of opium is delivered by the receiving vessel until it has been previously paid for in cash, and the fear of their cannon balls effectively prevents the Chinese war junks from interfering with them. The whole business of the transport of opium between Lintin and Canton is so admirably managed that the boats are but seldom interfered with, nor are they likely to be, so long as the *Free Traders* can afford to pay

the mandarins so much better for not fighting, than the government will for doing their duty.

"The use of opium has become so universal among the people of China that the laws which render it penal, and the proclamations which send forth their daily fulminations against its continuance, have not the slightest effect in checking the prevalence of so general a habit. Smoking houses abound in Canton; and the inhabitants of every class who can furnish themselves with the means to obtain the pipe, are seldom without this article of general luxury. It is a propensity that has seized upon all ranks and classes, and is generally on the increase."

Early in the century, some of the members of the Canton Council of the East India Company still continued their efforts to prevent this rapid growth of the smuggling trade. Humane supercargoes probably felt distinctly uncomfortable about the rising imports of Indian opium. These men were on the spot; they witnessed the disastrous effects on the Chinese population of the opium habit. Besides, many of these Englishmen in China had a tradition of honest trading to maintain, and they disliked being involved even indirectly in this illicit commerce.

In 1800 the Council in Canton pointed out to the Court of Directors of the Honourable East India Company that, despite the Chinese import prohibition, the opium trade at Macao was being carried on without "any unusual impediments" and "with great profits to those engaged in it." Nevertheless the Council rather timidly urged the Directors to take some action against this trade. The members of the Council "were desirous to guard

against every accident by which the Honourable Company could in any manner be implicated in the charge of illicit trade."

As time went on, the Company's representatives in China were less conscientious than the men who wrote this letter. In 1840 an opium merchant, a Mr. Jardine, testifying before the Parliamentary Opium Committee, declared that the members of the Canton Council must have made profits from the opium traffic, because many of them advanced money on it.

Even when the Council in Canton was still advising against the trade with China, however, the Court of Directors disregarded those warnings except that they increased their precautions for secrecy. Officially the Directors had nothing whatever to do with the opium clippers travelling up and down the Coast, or with the warehouse ships. The captains of these vessels alone were made responsible.

Naturally, as these captains assumed all the risks, and many of them had grown up when private profits were allowed employees of the Company, some of them tried to buy opium in India and sell it privately in China. The Company was determined that this should not happen and no Company ship was allowed to sail between India and China without a licence. No licence was issued until an inspector of the Company had ascertained that there was no opium on board. Actually, of course, what these inspectors ascertained was that there was only Company opium on board.

It must have been obvious to everyone concerned that this system of licences was a farce. For the Company

frankly announced both its intention of "taking measures for extending the cultivation of the poppy, with a view to a large increase in the supply of opium," and at the same time the policy of "restraining the use of this pernicious drug" in India itself was continued. It was clear that the increased production was destined for China.

Efforts were also made, as early as 1818, to gain control of the Malwa opium, that is, the opium produced in the native states not under the Company's domination. If the Indian chiefs had been permitted to produce and sell the drug as they saw fit, the Company's monopoly would have become virtually meaningless. The Company therefore came to an arrangement with these native rulers and sent representatives to Indore to purchase large quantities of Malwa opium which was then sold by auction in Bombay.

John Stuart Mill once wrote about these transactions with the native chiefs. "So long," he wrote, "as the country between Malwa and the coast was in the hands of the Mahrattas, and the transport of valuable commodities was insecure, only a small quantity reached the Coast. When the country came into our possession, and carriage was safe, it was seen that a large supply might go to the China market, and lower the price. To obviate this evil we entered into treaties with the chieftains in whose territory the opium is grown, and obtained their consent to limit the quantity grown in their territories, and to sell the whole of it to us."

This arrangement concerning the Malwa opium—it was usually called the Malwa monopoly—lasted until

1831, when the treaties with the native rulers could safely be annulled. By this time the Company dominated the entire opium coast, with the exception of the port at Dauaun. The transport from the *hinterland* to Dauaun was slow and difficult, and this meant that the Company virtually controlled the entire coast from which Malwa opium was exported to China. The Company, therefore, decided to fix an export tax on every chest. Apart from providing a considerable revenue, this made it impossible for Malwa opium to be sold more cheaply in China than the Patna product.

When the Malwa opium began to enter China, these quantities added to the Patna imports made the two hundred chests which had formerly been imported seem a negligible quantity.

The increase in Chinese imports during the first few decades of the century was tremendous. The average for the years 1798–99 and 1899–1900 was 1,793 chests from the Company Monopoly at Bengal and 2,323 from Malwa. By 1810 3,592 chests were imported from Bengal and 1,376 from Malwa.

After that, when the trade was more thoroughly organized, the rise was more rapid still. In 1821–22: 3,298 chests from Bengal; 2,278 from Malwa. In 1827–28: 6,650 from Bengal; 4,504 from Malwa. In 1834–35: 10,207 from Bengal; 11,678 from Malwa. In 1838–39: 18,212 from Bengal; 21,988 from Malwa.

The number of known opium consumers in China—according to the Chinese Repository for 1837—rose rapidly with these rising imports. In 1820, there were 265,299 Chinamen who smoked opium; by 1829 this

figure had risen to 1,034,520, and by 1835 it was 2,039,998.

In 1816 Dr. Abel Clarke described the new methods of smoking which had become fashionable in China.

"No opium," he wrote, "is exposed in the shops probably because it is a contraband article, but it is used with tobacco in all parts of the Empire. The Chinese, indeed, consider the smoking of opium as one of the greatest luxuries; and if they are temperate in drinking, they are often excessive in the use of this drug. They have more than one method of smoking it: sometimes they envelop a piece of solid gum in tobacco and smoke it from a pipe with a very small bowl, and sometimes they steep fine tobacco in a strong solution of it, and use it in the same way. The smokers of opium have a very peculiar sottish and sheepish physiognomy, in consequence of the whole visage being turgid with blood. . . ."

This popular habit of smoking opium represented not only a social but an economic danger to China. Silver, to pay India for the opium, was rapidly flowing out of the country, although permission was not often given for the exportation of dollars, and officially, at least, native silver (*sycee*) was never allowed to leave the country.

For China, from every point of view, the opium situation had become exceedingly serious. The Central Government was alarmed, but Peking was far from Canton, and many Government officials in the capital and at the coast had become corrupt. The machinery for giving

and receiving the bribes connected with the illicit trade was strong and growing stronger.

One edict followed another. In 1809, the Hong merchants in Canton, that is to say, the traders licensed to deal with foreigners, were ordered to give bonds of security that there was no opium on board any ship unloading her cargo at Whampoa. This Edict was a failure. In 1815, an order was issued that all ships at Macao were to be searched for opium. This Chinese effort, too, was frustrated by the cleverness of the smugglers, the corrupt officials and the Chinese traders.

In 1820 more severe methods against imports were tried: every Chinaman found with supplies of opium was executed. This time, as far as the Hong merchants were concerned, the Government action was more successful. The captains of the warehouse ships at Whampoa were nervous. The stores were moved to Lintin. In 1821, three English and one American vessel carrying opium were seized by the Chinese Government, and the opium on board was destroyed.

The English supercargoes in Canton began to be distinctly uneasy. They felt that the profitable opium traffic was in danger. In their secret reports to the Directors of the East India Company in London they pointed out that the situation was alarming. In 1822 they wrote to London that the Chinese Government's measures against the opium trade were "persisted in by the Viceroy of Canton with such a degree of pertinacity, as to occasion the most serious interruption of this most important branch of the trade."

Actually, what was happening was more than an

interruption of trade. The commercial difficulties were merely a symptom of the atmosphere of friction which prevailed. The business relations, made inharmonious by the illicit opium trade, were causing profound differences of opinion and were at the same time bringing the Chinese and the English and other Westerners too close together. The English resented having the sailors from their vessels tried by the harsh Chinese law when these men, reaching port after long and strenuous voyages, drank too much and became disorderly. The Chinese authorities, on the other hand, whose resentment about the illegal opium traffic was, quite understandably, growing beyond control, were bitterly opposed to these foreigners, who, so the Chinese quite rightly declared, "felt no gratitude for the hospitality" given them in China, "but smuggled opium, which poisons the empire."

Looking back from a distance of over a century, one may agree with E. L. Woodward when he remarks that the disorders in Canton at this time were due to the "irreconcilable differences of outlook between the societies of East and West." But, at that time, and on the spot, in and near Canton in the early forties of the nineteenth century, the great problems of East and West were temporarily forgotten, because the individual quarrels and rows and assaults occupied men's minds to the exclusion of larger issues.

The English were, of course, chiefly concerned with what they termed their commercial rights; they were defending, above all, their very lucrative opium trade. The fact that this commerce was illegal in China, did not make them consider it any less their prerogative. They

were also, however, irrationally enraged by the Chinese' insistence on the observance of their ancient customs.

The Chinese, for their part, were horrified and often deeply offended by the Western manners of the English, who seemed to think that they owned Canton.

In our own time when smooth and expensive diplomatic usage never prevents wars, but has at least found a convention for casual meetings of people of various nationalities, it is difficult to imagine what these conflicts in China were like. Actually, there was no solution, because, with dignity, neither the English nor the Chinese thought it conceivable to submit to the customs of the other.

Both the Chinese and the English were sure of their leading position among the nations, and both, as a result, were irritated by the self-assurance of the other. When the Earl of Macartney came to represent George III at the Court of Peking in 1793, the Emperor, Ch'ien Ling was not in the least enthusiastic either about a diplomatic or a trade relation with England. He told the King of England quite frankly how he felt about it.

"As your Ambassador can see for himself," Emperor Ch'ien Ling wrote to King George III, "we have all things. I set no value on objects strange or ingenious, and have no use for your country's manufactures. This then is my answer to your request to appoint a representative at my Court, a request contrary to our dynastic usage, which would only result in inconvenience to yourself." A little later the Emperor assumed a more conciliatory tone: ". . . But as tea," he wrote, "silk and porcelain, which the Celestial Empire produces, are

absolute necessities to European nations, and to yourselves, we have permitted, as a signal mark of favour, that foreign *hongs* shall be established at Canton, so that your wants might be supplied and your country thus participate in our benevolence."

The Chinese attitude had not altered very much when Lord Amherst's mission set out for China in 1816. His relations with the Court at Peking illustrate the sort of tension which prevailed before the Opium Wars. When he was received by the Emperor, Lord Amherst was expected to make nine prostrations, that is to say, he was to fall down flat on the floor nine times. No European, especially no Englishmen, who feared making what he considered a fool of himself more than death, could possibly have done this. Lord Amherst was dismissed from the imperial presence in disfavour.

Already, however, the economic and social differences between the Chinese and the English went far deeper than this friction about manners, but if opium had not rankled in the minds of both nations, they would probably have found some *modus vivendi*, some way to overcome the gulf of divergent conventions which was separating them. If it had not been for the illicit trade, furthermore, which had resulted in such violent disorders, the quarrels about legal procedure might have been less intense. As it was, the English were angry when the Chinese passed judgment on their compatriots, and the Chinese, naturally enough, declared that in China, Chinese law was all powerful.

"We Chinese," they declared, "have no desire to screen our countrymen from punishment when they are

guilty, but the inquiry must be carried out according to our own forms and usages."

Many cases are on record of murders during this period. It would be interesting to know how many men, including those who fell in the Opium Wars, died for the cause of opium. Sailors from opium cutters who boasted of their successes were killed by Chinese. Chinamen who, so the traders thought, were interfering in their "rightful" trade were murdered by Westerners. Many of these brawls involved the "respectable" opium merchants themselves. The case of Mr. James Innes, an English merchant, was so typical that it is worth recording.

Mr. Innes had made a great deal of money on opium. In one year, for instance, in 1831, on one voyage, he made 330,000 dollars. Mr. Innes despised the Chinese, and their customs irritated him. In April, 1833, a Chinaman, who lived next door to Mr. Innes, was chopping wood. This noise annoyed Mr. Innes to such an extent that he could bear it no longer. He complained to the Hong merchant with whom he arranged his business. The Hong, in turn, and it was this slowness of Chinese procedure which finally infuriated the impatient Mr. Innes, got an order from the superintendent of customs prohibiting the chopping of wood so near Mr. Innes's sensitive ears. Nevertheless, and who can blame the neighbour, the chopping continued.

Mr. Innes then went to the Superintendent's house. Mr. Innes was not received, but while he was waiting a man with a chopper attacked him. The records do not state whether this man was Mr. Innes's neighbour or one of his friends. At any rate, Mr. Innes, who had

taken two Englishmen with him as witnesses in case of trouble, was slightly cut in the arm. Mr. Innes then informed his Hong merchant that if the man who had wounded him was not arrested by evening and tried, he, Mr. Innes, would set fire to the Superintendent's house. It was then two o'clock in the afternoon.

The man had not been found and arrested by eight o'clock, and Mr. Innes set fire to the Superintendent's house with rockets and blue lights.

"Redress," we learn from the records compiled by H. B. Morse, "was at once accorded. Mr. Innes's assailant was punished next day, being exposed all over Canton wearing the cangue."

Nothing was said about the Superintendent's house; the fact that it had been burned was apparently his personal affair. The select committee of English merchants in Canton vaguely stated afterwards that Mr. Innes had "acted unjustifiably," but he himself was satisfied, and Lord Napier, who later represented the English Government in Canton, praised him for his firmness. "Success has always attended determination," Lord Napier remarked in connection with the Innes case.

One can imagine that Mr. Innes's manner towards the Chinese was not softened or improved after this incident, and that the antagonism of the Chinese was heightened by injustices of this kind, injustices which became extremely frequent.

The attitude of the Chinese in the Innes case was symptomatic of a weakening of Chinese defences against the opium traffic. To an influential group of Chinamen, in fact, it seemed utterly hopeless to try to stop this



*In a Chinese opium den*



illegal trade. The Governor of Canton, the Vice-President of the Sacrificial Court, and other prominent Chinese politicians therefore organized a movement for legalization. If the drug was coming into China in any case, they argued, it would be easier to supervise and restrict this traffic if it became legal and was thus forced into the open.

Naturally, as the illicit trade, fetching higher prices, and bringing in greater profits than a legal trade, had functioned very well for years, the merchants and corrupt officials involved, objected strenuously to such a suggestion. Though a number of prominent Chinamen continued to be in favour of legalization, their efforts were not successful.

In the meantime, the friction between the English and the Chinese was reaching a climax. In 1833 a quarrel between sailors belonging to the opium fleet and a number of Chinese resulted in so many casualties that a war between China and England seemed inevitable. Until this time, the British Government had maintained a stand-offish attitude towards the disorders in China.

“It is essential,” the London Directors had written to their representatives in Canton, “that you should clearly understand, that you are not representatives of the British Nation, but of the East India Company.” The British Government had not yet been ready openly to protect the British opium interests in China. Now, late in 1833 and early in 1834, Parliament realized that something must be done to safeguard this source of revenue. The Government therefore assumed the responsibility of supervising British trade in China.

# 6

IN 1834 this new phase in the history of opium began. The East India Company's responsibility for the trade in opium ended, and the official control by the British Government began. This does not mean that the Government took charge of it openly or officially. As before, during the regime of the East India Company, the illicit trade in opium to China was not admitted to exist; it was not mentioned. And when Captain Charles Elliot, who was the British representative in China after 1836, frankly discussed the opium trade with his Government at home, this was the first time that any reference to the trade had been made except in secret documents.

The European community in Canton, as a contemporary records, was "very much horrified to find that Captain Elliot had for the first time committed his Government to a knowledge of the opium trade, because in the time of the East India Company, the East India

Company's factory had most carefully avoided admitting to the Chinese that they knew anything about it, and so had H.M. Government always done up to that period."

For many years before the East India Company's monopoly was formally ended, the British Government had exercised considerable influence in the conduct of Indian exports, but never had the delicate subject of the illicit Chinese opium trade, a subject which would have shocked many upright people in England, been frankly approached. Opinions on opium had been confined to most confidential reports, despite the fact that the drug was such a vital factor in the revenue. The relation of British opium imports into Canton to her other imports indicates just how important opium was. In the year ending June 30th, 1828, total British imports into Canton were valued at \$12,365,560 of which opium represented \$11,243,496. In 1831 this relation was \$12,520,541 to \$11,212,512; in 1834 \$14,234,235 to \$11,618,712.

The growth of British Government control of the Indian opium trade had come about gradually. By the India Act of 1784, six Commissioners for Indian Affairs had been appointed. After 1812, the President of this Commission had been a member of the Cabinet. The monopoly of the East India Company continued, but already the Government was in fact supervising the trade in the East.

During the Napoleonic Wars, when there was such a scramble for foreign markets, many individual English traders began actively to oppose the East India Company's trade monopoly, and in 1813, the Directors of the

Company submitted to this pressure and granted licences to traders with vessels of more than 350 tons.

The East India Company did not, however, at first, give way as far as the Chinese trade was concerned. The opium traffic was too lucrative, and too complicated to warrant the admission of outsiders. The Company jealously retained its monopoly of the Chinese market.

Not until 1833, by the India Act of that year, were the Company's monopoly rights in China annulled. The East India Company no longer managed or mismanaged the trade and social relations with China. The British Government, whether this fact was admitted or not, was now solely responsible for the illicit opium traffic. It was believed that the disorders resulting from this trade in and around Canton might be dealt with more efficiently by Government representatives who would be able to call freely upon British warships to assist them in case of more serious trouble.

In 1834, the Government appointed three Superintendents of the Trade of British subjects in China. Lord Napier was chosen as the Chief Superintendent. He arrived in China in July, 1834, with very vague instructions, and no official orders whatsoever regarding the steps to be taken about the opium trade which was the crux of the whole situation.

In fact, in the Manual of Instructions to Superintendents of the Trade in China, the Government maintained its persistent policy of silence with regard to opium. The Superintendents were told to protect British traders "in the peaceful prosecution of all *lawful* enterprises." They were, in other words, to go on pretending that

the illegal opium trade did not exist, but they were not to curtail it in any way. Napier was urged to "discourage adventurous traders" but he was never to forget that he had "no authority to interfere with or prevent them."

In no respect were the instructions included in this Manual really helpful. They were merely a compilation of meaningless phrases. The Superintendents were ordered to adjust disputes between the English merchants and the Chinese by "arbitration or persuasion" and to "avoid any language, conduct or demeanour which would excite jealousy or distrust among the Chinese people, or government or irritate them."

In view of this warning it seems almost incredible that in his personal advice to Napier, Palmerston should have contradicted this emphasis on tact. He made the inexcusable blunder of telling Napier "to announce his arrival at Canton by letter to the Viceroy."

To write direct to the Viceroy was an offence against one of the oldest customs in China. As long as the East India Company or any other foreigners had traded with China, it had been the rule for them to communicate with him and with all Chinese officials through the Hong merchants who passed on any communications to the proper authorities. And as Napier was called a Superintendent of Trade and not a diplomatic representative of England, the Chinese were, of course, fully justified in expecting him to observe the established regulations governing foreign traders, especially as the British Government had not informed the Chinese Government that they were sending a mission to China, or that they were altering the arrangements regarding the Chinese trade.

Many Englishmen were shocked by this lack of courtesy shown a foreign country by their Government. In a memorandum written in 1835, the Duke of Wellington expressed his opinion of the Government's rudeness:

"It is quite obvious," he wrote, "that the attempt made to force upon the Chinese authorities at Canton an unaccustomed mode of communication with an authority of whose powers and of whose nature they had no knowledge, which commenced its proceedings by an assumption of power hitherto unadmitted, had completely failed . . . as it is obvious that such an attempt must invariably fail, and lead again to national disgrace."

Men like Wellington were not surprised at the reaction in China to Napier's blunt methods. "The merchants themselves," wrote the Governor of Canton when the Hong merchants complained at having been ignored by Napier, "shall direct the petty affairs of commerce. Any changes in the trade of said barbarians should come from the merchants themselves."

In Peking too, there was an outcry against Napier. "Even England," the Governor of Canton wrote contemptuously, "has its laws; how much more the Celestial Empire!" Napier's mission had not begun well.

Napier himself made matters worse by showing his annoyance instead of trying to smooth over the difficulties his own and Palmerston's tactlessness had created. In his anger, and his belief that firmness was always best, he posted placards in Canton inciting the native population to take a stand against "the ignorance and obstinacy of their Viceroy."

The Viceroy answered by calling Napier a "lawless

foreign slave"; Napier wrote to London calling the Vice-roy a "presumptuous savage." The Cantonese were enraged; they besieged Napier's residence. He was forced to make an inglorious retreat to Macao, where he died of fever shortly afterwards. England's first attempt to conciliate the antagonistic factions in China ended with failure and undignified defeat. The opium trade was causing a lot of trouble. Napier was another man whose death was caused indirectly by opium.

Lord Napier's lack of diplomacy had aggravated the situation. It was known in China that poppy cultivation in India had been extended, and that the illicit trade was bound to increase. There were now seven or eight large warehouse ships at Lintin, for some years before the Chinese had forced them out of Whampoa. "Fast crabs" as the opium clippers were then called, travelled up and down the coast, and the bribery amongst Chinese officials was increasing. Besides, the manner of men like Mr. Innes who was again threatening to take independent action because some of his opium had been seized, had become more overbearing since Lord Napier had publicly approved of their "determination." The hatred felt by many Chinamen against the English can be imagined and understood. Several efforts were made to have Mr. Innes and other merchants deported from China, but with the support of the British Government, they stayed and continued to bully the native population.

John Francis Davis, who had been one of Napier's assistants and acted as the Chief Superintendent until the appointment of Sir George Robinson in January, 1835, realized that the opposition of the Chinese government

towards the opium merchants and towards the trade was growing more and more formidable. He was the only one of the Superintendents who knew China and the Chinese language, and he begged the British Government, if war was to be avoided, to take the new Edicts issued in Peking against opium more seriously.

Sir George Robinson continued these warnings. He did not go to Canton where Napier had increased the unpopularity of the English. Instead, Robinson decided to live in Lintin, where he could observe the smuggling trade at first hand. Palmerston did not approve of this choice of residence, for the British Government persisted in refusing to acknowledge the existence of the opium trade. In the end, Robinson was curtly dismissed, Palmerston wrote to him on June 7th, 1836, simply saying that "your functions will cease from the date of the receipt of this dispatch."

When one reads Robinson's reports, one can understand why he was disliked by a Cabinet which was evading the main issue: opium. His reports are distinctly ironical. He wrote that the "trade was proceeding satisfactorily," that "he would persist in following the quiescent policy in order that the way might be clear for whatever instructions might be sent," thus making the Cabinet discuss the unpleasant question of the illicit opium traffic. He never received an answer or instructions; except his dismissal, and he deeply offended those Englishmen at home who were preaching in one way or another that for the sake of the revenue, the secret opium trade must continue, though, as far as China was concerned, it must never be admitted to exist. One of his reports contains an en-

lightened passage which must have been most annoying for the Cabinet:

“Whenever H.M. Government direct us to prevent British vessels from engaging in the traffic, we can enforce any order to that effect, but a more certain method would be to prohibit the growth of the poppy, and manufacture of opium in British India.”

Sir George Robinson’s conscience was undoubtedly cleared by his own courageous honesty, but he had not done anything to improve the situation in China. And his successor, Captain Charles Elliot, confronted an almost impossible task. For the Chinese, quite naturally, held him responsible for the opium traffic and the disorders and murders and arrests which resulted from it, whereas officially, according to his instructions from home, he was in control only of the “lawful trade with China.”

Captain Elliot’s efforts were the more admirable, as he was fully aware of the ambiguity of his position, and realized from the start that, unless some miracle happened the situation was hopeless and events would move steadily towards a war in which thousands of lives would be lost for the sake of opium.

At the very beginning of his Superintendency he wrote: “Sooner or later the feeling of independence, which the peculiar mode of conducting this branch of trade has created upon the part of our countrymen in China, will lead to grave difficulties. A long course of impunity will beget hardihood, and at last some gross insult will be perpetrated that the Chinese authorities will be constrained to resent; they will be terrified and irritated, and probably

commit some act of cruel violence, that will make any course but armed interference impossible to our Government."

Despite this pessimistic outlook, Elliot was resolved to do everything in his power to force the Palmerston Government to take action with regard to opium. It mortified Elliot to see that so many of his compatriots, and his Government at home, were condoning the illicit traffic in this dangerous drug.

"The actual state of things," he wrote miserably, "cannot be left to the turn of events, without such deeply rooted injury to the national character in the estimation of this huge portion of mankind, as it is painful, indeed, to reflect upon. . . . The natural consequences of the present system is the corruption of all, both high and low, and the infecting of the coasts with evil men, both foreign and native."

Not only, as has been mentioned, was Elliot the first to bring the whole problem of opium out into the open. He went further than frankly discussing the opium trade. He wrote in his reports that opium was the most important item of British imports into China. And when, early in 1837, the Chinese authorities urged him to have the warehouse ships removed from the river, he did not, like some of his predecessors, pretend that he did not know what they were talking about. He admitted that the trade existed, made formal acknowledgments of copies of the many new edicts against opium imports, and regretted that he could do nothing without the command of his Sovereign in England.

He begged the British Government to support him in

his wish to clean up the river, and suggested that a "gradual check to our own growth and import (of opium) might be salutary in effect."

Early in 1838 it was obvious to everyone that the patience of the Chinese was exhausted. The general confusion was increased by the nervous indecision of the Court of Peking. At times the Court seemed in favour of legalizing the opium trade and then the tension was relaxed for a moment, only to grow more intolerable when it became known that, after all, Peking was in favour of continuing the old policy of banning the trade.

Chinamen arrested and charged with complicity in the opium traffic were publicly executed. In April, 1838, for instance, a man was killed outside Macao. Others were executed in front of the factories belonging to English merchants. On December 3rd, two coolies carrying boxes of opium towards Mr. Innes's factory were arrested. On December 12th, the square in front of the foreign factories was chosen by the Chinese as the execution ground. Some of the Europeans seeing this spectacle made anti-Chinese remarks and are said to have "provoked the people by assailing them with sticks." Serious disorders began.

"For a space of near two hours," Elliot reported to Palmerston, "the foreign factories were within the power of an immense and excited mob, the gate of one of them was absolutely battered in, and a pistol was fired out, probably without ball or over the heads of the people, for at least it is certain that nobody fell."

After this riot, the Hong merchants went on strike, refusing to trade with Englishmen until an end had been

made to the illicit opium traffic. Commerce was at a standstill in Canton. Ships lay idle in the harbour wasting time and money. Captain Elliot called a meeting of all foreign traders in Canton and ordered the vessels engaged in the illegal traffic to leave the coast within three days. A few of the captains obeyed; others remained in Lintin calmly flying the British flag. When the excitement after the riots of December 12th had died down, and normal trade was resumed by the Hong merchants, the opium smuggling went on as before.

From the British Government at home Captain Elliot received very little expert advice or active support during these difficult weeks. One should never forget in this connection that in 1839, the year after Queen Victoria's coronation, opium and with it China, was only one of the many distressing problems confronting her young Majesty's Government. On the American Continent, friction had arisen between Lower and Upper Canada and this conflict was already threatening to develop into a most unpleasant revolt. In India things looked equally black. Cabul was occupied in 1839, and two years later the Afghans rebelled and the British suffered heavy losses in the Khyber Pass. Palmerston was also taking upon himself the troubles concerning the succession in Portugal and Spain, where he was giving British support to Donna Maria and Isabella against other claimants to these two thrones.

The Cabinet was also involved in domestic difficulties. Apart from constructive activities, such as the plans for national education made in 1839, the Government was faced with growing discontent among the poorer classes

which culminated in the People's Charter during that year. The anti-Corn League, whereby Free Traders tried to enforce their policies, was also organized in 1839.

It is not entirely surprising therefore that Palmerston and his Cabinet seemed to neglect the opium issue. Captain Elliot had written to the Foreign Secretary on November 19th, 1837, but the answer is dated June 15th, 1838, and it was not received by Elliot until January, 1839, when it was of academic interest only. Besides, even during this crisis Palmerston had not been able to take a firm line. Elliot had urged the Foreign Secretary to appoint a British representative to China who would be empowered not only to admit that the opium trade existed, but who would be allowed to deal with it. But Palmerston replied that "H.M. Government do not see their way with sufficient clearness to justify them in adopting it (such a plan) at the present moment."

Palmerston went so far as to admit that "Her Majesty's Government could not interfere for the purpose of enabling British subjects to violate the laws of the country in which they trade. Any loss, therefore, which such persons may suffer in consequence of the more effectual execution of the Chinese laws on this subject, must be borne by the parties who have brought that loss on themselves by their own acts."

This decision meant nothing. For never had the Government taken the responsibility for opium which had been seized by the Chinese Government from private traders. From the days when the East India Company was in control, there had never, as had been repeatedly emphasized, been any official sanction of the opium trade,

and for this reason neither the Company nor the Government had ever compensated these traders for confiscations.

Clearly, Captain Elliot had to use his own judgment and cope with the crisis as best he could. And there was no doubt that the crisis was at hand. The Chinese had appointed a special Commissioner, Lin, to settle the opium problem and to clear out the smugglers. He was not a man who liked half-measures. He ordered every chest of opium to be destroyed in China. He demanded of foreigners that they should sign a bond never again to import opium into China. Should they be found to do so, they were to be executed.

Some of the smugglers were at first deceived by Commissioner Lin's numerous proclamations. They were firm enough in tone. Strong words were used in his accusations, but there was a poetic strain in them which caused many to believe he was a man of words rather than of action.

"Why do you bring to our country the opium," one of Lin's declarations read, "which in your country is not used, and by it defrauding men of their property, and causing injury to their lives? I find that with this thing you have seduced and deluded the people of China for tens of years past; and countless are the unjust hoards you have thus acquired. Such conduct rouses indignation in every human heart, and it is utterly inexcusable in the eye of Celestial reason."

Captain Elliot was never for a moment taken in by Lin's fondness of rhetoric. The increasing number of executions near British factories of Chinamen involved in the trade had brought the issues very close to home. Elliot

accepted these executions for what they were: threats to English lives and property. And whatever his attitude towards the illicit trade, he now considered it his first duty to stand by his compatriots.

Lin announced his intention of confiscating opium. Elliot urged the opium merchants to offer the Chinese authorities a compromise. When Mr. Innes, who had been such a nuisance all along, continued to import opium, and Lin ordered his deportation, Elliot agreed to send him away. But then Lin demanded the expulsion of sixteen other English traders, and Elliot refused to make them leave.

At his suggestion the opium traders had offered to hand over 1,030 chests of opium and to send the other stocks in Chinese waters back to India. Naturally, however, Lin realized that this was no solution. Instead he confiscated 20,291 chests, worth over two million pounds sterling, and every ball of it was destroyed. To accomplish this confiscation, Lin drew a cordon round the factories and stopped the supplies of food and water needed by the men who remained inside. Apart from these uncompromising measures against the opium trade, the Chinese authorities began to organize a boycott of all English goods. On January 5th, 1840, Commissioner Lin issued a proclamation placing a "perpetual" embargo on English imports. Canton was to be closed "for ever" to all British vessels.

Elliot and the English merchants left Canton. They went to Macao, but their supplies were cut off by the Chinese. The English then went to Hong Kong. Riots occurred. A British passenger vessel was attacked. Elliot

accepted this as a declaration of war. He returned unread all communications from Commissioner Lin.

Elliot, who had been so level-headed, seems to have lost his judgment at this point, for he ordered fire to be opened upon a Chinese junk which had boycotted the provisions expected by the English. The next day he bitterly regretted this action, which, so he himself declared, "would be difficult indeed of vindication."

These shots at the junk were the beginning of the Opium Wars. There were many people in England who appreciated the injustice which had been done China. Mr. Gladstone expressed the disapproval of many of his compatriots when he later declared in the House of Commons:

"They (the Chinese) gave you notice to abandon your contraband trade. When they found you would not, they had a right to drive you from their coasts, on account of your obstinacy in persisting in this infamous and atrocious traffic. You allowed your agent to aid and abet those who were concerned in carrying on that trade; and I do not know how it can be urged as a crime against the Chinese that they refused provisions to those who refused obedience to their laws whilst residing within their territories. A war more unjust in its origin, a war more calculated to cover this country with permanent disgrace, I do not know, and I have not read of. The right honourable gentleman opposite spoke of the British flag waving in glory in Canton. That flag is hoisted to protect an infamous contraband traffic; and if it never were hoisted, except as it is now hoisted on the coast of China, we should recoil from its sight with horror. Although the

Chinese were undoubtedly guilty of much absurd phraseology, of no little ostentatious pride, and of some excess, justice, in my opinion is with them; and whilst they, the Pagans, the semi-civilized barbarians, have it on their side, we the enlightened and civilized Christians, are pursuing objects at variance both with justice and with religion."

IN December, 1841, John Quincy Adams lectured before the Massachusetts Historical Society. He discussed the War in which England was then involved with China. Adams said that "opium is a mere incident to the dispute, but no more the cause of the War than the throwing overboard of the tea in Boston harbour was the cause of the North American Revolution."

It is amazing that an historian of Adams's standing should have made this statement. For the tea incident in Boston harbour was a symptom of the Americans' rebellion against the taxation on many commodities imposed upon them by England, whereas, and this should never be forgotten, the Opium Wars began after Commissioner Lin had destroyed huge quantities of opium. The tea had been a symbol, whereas in the First Opium War two million pounds sterling were lost by British merchants, and the future millions of the English revenue, as well as the outlet for the Indian opium production was threatened.

The first thing Admiral Bremer did, when he arrived at Tientsin, was to demand payment for the opium which Lin had destroyed.

Many historians agree with John Quincy Adams, and it is true that eventually, even had the opium controversy not existed, some pretext would probably have been found to attack the Chinese, for Lancashire was ready to send large shipments of cheap cotton goods to the East. The Indian market was in fact already flooded with this Lancashire product.

These considerations do not, however, alter the fact that this particular War was fought about opium and that the men who were killed on both sides lost their lives for the sake of the opium profits. Sir Henry Pottinger, who went to China to negotiate the treaty of peace after the First Opium War, admitted this quite frankly when he spoke of "the great cause that produced the disturbances which led to the War, i.e. the trade in opium."

Besides, historians who contend that opium was merely an incidental reason for this War, like to leave the Chinese attitude entirely out of account. These historians seem to forget that those warred upon also have a right to their belief as to what brought about hostilities. And the Chinese attributed the War to opium and to nothing else.

In a long "Letter to the Queen of England from the Imperial Commissioner and the Provincial authorities requiring the interdiction of opium," opium is frankly acknowledged as the crux of the situation.

This Letter which again summarized the wrong done to China by the smugglers, gave a vivid picture of the devastation created by opium, and emphasized that in

Queen Victoria's "honourable nation people are not permitted to inhale the drug, and that offenders in this particular expose themselves to sore punishment."

The Letter ends: "Earnestly reflect hereon. Earnestly observe these things." If the young Queen was shown this letter, one feels that she must indeed have reflected earnestly on these accusations against her countrymen, that she must have wondered how these accusations could be fitted in with her sincere Christian beliefs.

Perhaps Palmerston thought it wiser to keep this message from her. At any rate, Queen Victoria's reactions, if she saw the Letter, were surprisingly callous. She was bored and not shocked by the whole Chinese affair and the Opium War. Later, when the peace was being arranged, she wrote to her uncle, the King of the Belgians:

"The Chinese business vexes us much, and Palmerston is deeply mortified by it. *All* we wanted might have been got, if it had not been for the unaccountably strange conduct of Charles Elliot . . . who completely disobeyed his instructions and *tried* to get the *lowest* terms he could."

Queen Victoria might have changed her mind had she realized the real ghastliness of this first Opium War. It lasted for fourteen months and was a series of raids and bombardments up and down 1,500 miles of sea coast and inland river.

The English did not suffer heavy losses in battle, but the health of the army was very bad. Many English soldiers, unaccustomed as they were to the climate, to bad water and insanitary conditions, succumbed to dysentery and intermittent fever. The medical statistics for the troops occupy-

ing Tinghai are typical. At no time did the force stationed there exceed 4,000 men, but during the War 5,329 were admitted to hospital.

From the outset it was obvious that the Chinese had no chance of resisting the English forces. The Chinese were armed only with antiquated gingals, or only with bows and arrows. They were practically defenceless; and Joseph Rowntree reports that Sir Henry Pottinger admitted at a dinner of Liverpool merchants that, as a result, "the Chinese were mowed down like grass, and that gutters flowed with their innocent blood."

The *Edinburgh Magazine* of January, 1871, published an account of the capture of Chusan by the British in 1840:

"On 4th July, 1840, General Birrel, with three ships of war and three transports, arrived in the anchorage of Chusan harbour. An attempt was made that evening to obtain the surrender of the island without bloodshed; but as no arrangement could be come to, and the Chinese next morning indicated a resolution to resist, the *ultimo ratio regum*, a fire of round and grapeshot, was resorted to, which soon drove the Chinese from their forts and war junks with great slaughter. Troops were landed, and an assault on the capital of the island was resolved on for the next day, and preparations made for battering down the walls. Meanwhile shot and shell, for the purpose of 'trying the range', were thrown in which occasioned great slaughter among the unoffending inhabitants. During the night, however, the Chinese troops, and nearly the whole of the inhabitants evacuated the town, and the British entered it the next morning without resistance. The whole loss on the part of the British in this affair was one

man wounded. . . . Notwithstanding strict orders had been issued to respect private property, the sailors were allowed to leave their boats and to plunder the town. In a short time they had reduced it to a perfect wreck, wantonly destroying what they could not carry off. Great quantities of liquor, called Samshu, were found in the town, and the soldiers got so completely intoxicated that they had to be carried into the ships by whole companies, and almost regiments, in a state of insensibility."

That same year, the Bogue Forts were easily and as ruthlessly captured by the English warships. After these defeats, when even the most optimistic among the Chinese had been forced to realize the hopelessness of the situation, Hong Kong was offered to the English as a peace settlement, as well as 6,000,000 dollars to compensate for the opium destroyed by Lin. Palmerston officially referred to this sum as a "compensation for the opium surrendered," but later, when further indemnities were demanded from China for the confiscated drug, this 6,000,000 dollars was called "ransom money," that is to say, as Morse expresses it, "a compensation to the military and naval forces—prize money—in lieu of the plunder of the city."

Captain Elliot was in favour of accepting the terms suggested by the Chinese Government, but he was considered to be weak, and it was at this time that he incurred Palmerston's and Queen Victoria's disfavour reflected in the letter mentioned above.

"Captain Elliot," Palmerston wrote in great annoyance to the Queen, "seems to have wholly disregarded the instructions which had been sent to him, and even when, by the entire success of the operations of the fleet, he was

in a condition to dictate his own terms, he seems to have agreed to very inadequate conditions."

Palmerston was particularly angry, because after the first Chinese offer, naval and military operations against the Chinese had been continued. Canton as well as several other cities and districts, including Shanghai and Amoy, had been taken. The way was thus well prepared for a peace treaty more advantageous to England than the one Elliot had sent home. He was dismissed and Sir Henry Pottinger was appointed to succeed him.

Sir Henry Pottinger did not confront an easy task. Peace was not concluded until August 29th, 1842, when the Treaty was signed at Nankin. Apart from the six million dollars, China, by this Treaty, had to pay a war indemnity of 21,000,000 dollars, to be paid over a period of three and a half years.

The Nankin Treaty gave English merchants many new advantages. Hong Kong was ceded to the English and three ports apart from Canton—Amoy, Fu-chow, Ningpo and Shanghai—were opened up to them. British Consuls and warships in the harbour would henceforth protect British mercantile interests in these ports. Tariffs were fixed on products being imported from England and the monopoly heretofore enjoyed by the Hong merchants was abolished. Englishmen could trade with any Chinamen they chose.

Curiously enough, or perhaps it was consistent with England's inconsistency in this respect, opium was not mentioned in this Treaty. It was indirectly referred to in Article twelve which says vaguely, "that it is to be *hoped*" that the "system of smuggling which has heretofore been

carried on between English and Chinese merchants (in many cases with open connivance of Chinese custom-house officials) will entirely cease."

Years later this meaningless phrase of hope that smuggling would cease, was taken up by a group of courageous opponents of the opium traffic, but with no success. On March 9th, 1857, the Earl of Shaftesbury moved in the House of Lords that several questions concerning opium should be submitted for opinion to Her Majesty's judges. One of these questions was whether, in view of the clause in the Treaty which said that "it is to be hoped that the system of smuggling will cease," it is lawful for the East India Company to "deal with opium . . . with the full knowledge that it is so purchased . . . for the purpose of being smuggled into China, in contravention of the laws of that Empire. . . ."

Her Majesty's judges, however, upheld the smuggling trade in opium: "We are of the opinion," was their judgment, "that the legality of the manufacture and sale of opium by the East India Company is not directly affected by the Supplemental Treaty entered into by Her Majesty with the Emperor of China in October, 1843. *Opium is not mentioned in that Treaty*, and we are of the opinion that the East India Company may manufacture and sell opium (the revenue of which is applied for purposes of Government) without infringing the Treaty."

This legal opinion, given fourteen years after the signature of the Treaty of Nankin, shows why the drafters were clever when they decided not to mention the word opium in it. Another reason why the vital issue of opium was omitted from the Treaty was that this silence enabled

Great Britain to continue in her attitude of complete innocence in regard to the whole matter.

Sir Rutherford Alcock, later British Ambassador in China, categorically declared in the sixties that "it is a fact beyond question that the British Government had never claimed a right to introduce opium prior to 1859, exercised any force to protect foreign traders in opium transactions, or disputed the right of the Chinese Government to make what laws they pleased to prohibit its importation."

It is clear that such peculiarly false statements could not have been made by England's representatives in China, if the subject of opium had not been carefully avoided in public utterances and in official documents such as peace treaties.

There was still another reason why opium was not referred to in the Treaty of Nankin. If it had been, the British Government would have been forced to formulate some policy regarding the future trade in the drug. The English wanted China to take this responsibility. The British Government was confident that if tact were observed it would no longer be difficult to make the Chinese legalize this trade. The British representatives in China had in fact been expressly ordered by Lord Palmerston to "endeavour to make some arrangement with the Chinese Government for the admission of opium into China, as an article of lawful commerce."

Both Sir Henry Pottinger and Sir John Davis, who succeeded him, made every effort to persuade the Chinese Government to adopt a policy of legalization. But as yet, these efforts were not successful.

"I cannot prevent the introduction of the flowing poison," the Emperor of China answered the requests of the victorious English, "gain-seeking and corrupt men will for profit and sensuality defeat my wishes, but nothing will induce me to derive a revenue from the vice and misery of my own people."

The Emperor's insistence on what he considered his duty, meant that the smuggling trade continued as before the War, except that it had become easier for English smugglers to carry on this illicit trade. Hong Kong could be used as a base of supplies, and an efficient British warship was stationed at each of the five ports in which the English were free to trade.

Officially, however, the British Government did not yet support the smugglers. On August 1st, 1843, Sir Henry Pottinger considered it expedient to issue a manifesto, in which he pointed out that "opium being an article, the traffic in which is well-known to be declared illegal, and contraband by the laws and imperial edicts of China, any person who may take such a step will do so at his own risk, and will, if a British subject, meet with no support or protection from Her Majesty's Consuls or other officers."

This proclamation was, of course, merely a gesture to pacify the Chinese. The policy of the British consuls and other representatives was definitely to help the smugglers as much as they could without compromising England as a signatory of the Nankin Treaty.

With Hong Kong as a safe base for opium supplies, the warehouse ships were, of course, no longer necessary, and on February 24th, 1843, an Order in Council was

published forbidding British ships from violating the Treaty by carrying on trade outside the five Treaty ports.

Soon afterwards the official attitude adopted towards a Captain Hope of H.M.S. *Thalia*, who took this Order seriously, demonstrated to the English community in China, and to the Chinese what these regulations were really worth.

Captain Hope stopped two ships with opium on board which were coming from Shanghai. He knew that their commanders were breaking the law and that he, in turn, was doing his duty. As a result, Captain Hope was recalled from his station, and ordered to report for duty in India, where it would not be possible for him to "interfere in such a manner with the undertakings of British subjects."

Opium, in other words, had been not only the cause but the victor in this first Opium War. Shipments from India to China increased rapidly after the conclusion of peace. In 1840 the total imports into China, from Bengal and Malwa, amounted to 20,619 chests. In 1841 these imports had risen to 34,631; in 1845 they were 39,010; in 1850 they were 52,925; and by 1859 they had reached 75,822 chests.

At home in England the influence of opium was making itself felt as well. When Peel asked Gladstone to accept the Vice-Presidency of the Board of Trade, Gladstone declined because he could not "reconcile it to his sense of right to exact from China, as a term of peace, compensation for the opium surrendered to her." And in both Houses, differences ensued whenever China and opium came up for debate.

In 1843, in the House of Lords, the Earl of Shaftesbury voiced the opinion of thousands of Englishmen when he said: "I am fully convinced that for this country to encourage this nefarious traffic is bad, perhaps worse than encouraging the slave trade . . . the opium trade destroys the man both body and soul; and carries a hideous ruin over millions, which can never be repaired."

The opposition of Shaftesbury and others to the export of opium to China was, however, of more or less academic and moral value only. The situation could not be altered without readjusting England's entire colonial policy. For the crux of the problem was to be found in India, and the revenue of India was by this time considerably dependent on the cultivation of opium. Indian statistics for this period reflect how far this financial dependence on opium had already progressed. In the fiscal year 1849-50, for instance, the total net income derived from opium was £5,530,281. The total revenues of India for the same period amounted to £27,522,344, so that opium represented about a fifth of the total revenue. And as the revenue figures are gross (less refunds and drawbacks), the actual share of opium revenue in relation to the whole was really greater.

Clearly it was too late to save China from the increasing flood of opium imports from India without making tremendous financial sacrifices.

WHILE the first war was being fought in the East, an invention was made in Europe which was to dominate opium, and was eventually to cause morphine, the alkaloid, to take the place of the raw opium even amongst many consumers in the Far East.

This was the invention of the hypodermic syringe, with which morphine could be taken subcutaneously. A primitive form of morphine syringe was first used by Dr. Francis Rynd of Dublin in 1845; then by Charles-Gabriel Pravas in France in 1851. The instrument was perfected for general use by Dr. Alexander Wood in 1853. In the United States the hypodermic injection of morphine was introduced to medical practice by Fordyce Barker in 1856 and by George Thomson Elliot in 1858.

The principle of the hypodermic syringe was centuries old. In the first century B.C., Hero of Alexandria, one of the greatest mechanical geniuses of all ages, invented a syringe consisting of a cylinder with a well-fitting plunger

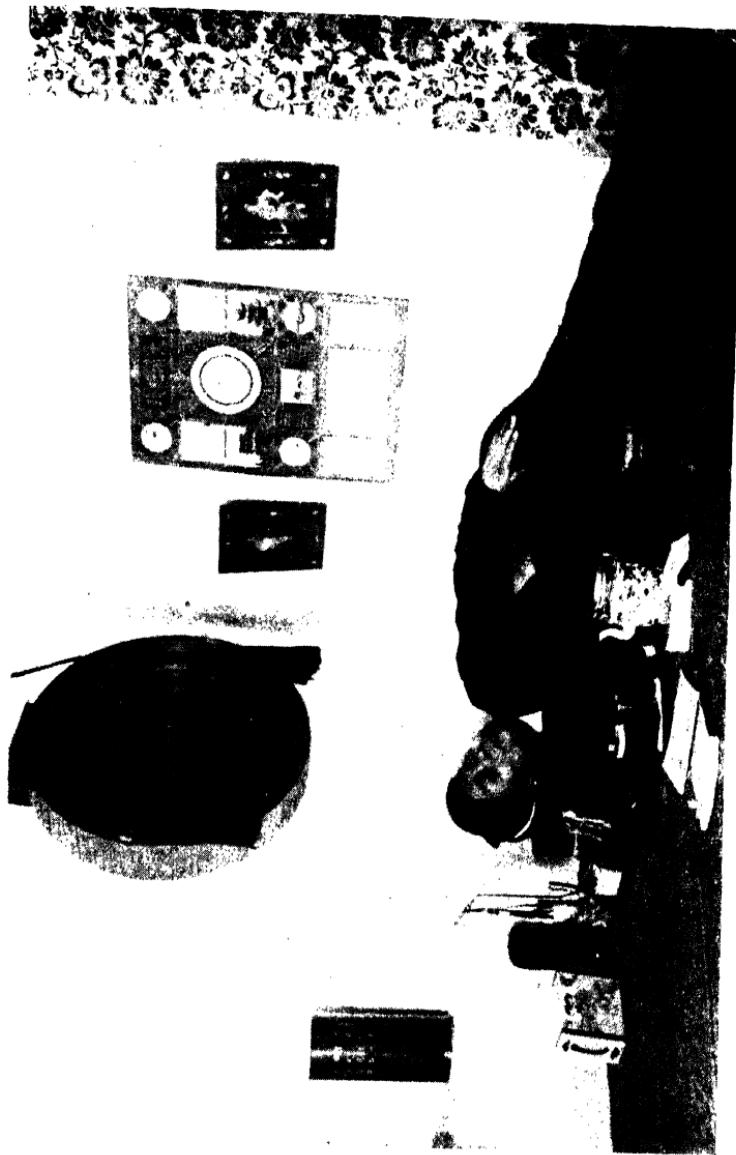
which was the model for every sort of syringe used after his time.

Dr. Wood's syringe was made according to this ancient model. He filled it with liquid morphine, injected the drug into the arm of his patients, and found that, as he had expected, he had finally achieved the quick result sought for by physicians of the past who had realized that somehow or other opium was more effective when not given through the mouth. To us the ignorance of Dr. Wood and many of his contemporaries seems almost incredible, but he naively believed that as, with his syringe, morphine was given under the skin, and not swallowed so that it passed through the patient's stomach, no "appetite" for the drug could be created. Wood proceeded on this theory, injected morphine freely and as a result many of his patients acquired the morphine habit. In fact Dr. Wood's own wife was one of the first recorded cases of death due to overdoses of morphine given with a hypodermic syringe.

Physicians who used Dr. Wood's invention and accepted his judgment really laid the corner stone of that terrible habit known to-day as "morphinism." For these well-meaning doctors provided their wealthier patients with syringes, taught them how to give themselves injections, and left them with sufficient doses of morphine to drug an entire household into addiction.

In Europe and in the United States a large number of men and women began to take injections of morphine as casually and as idly as they drank alcohol. Then they realized too late that they had formed a habit more difficult and more painful to break than any other.

In the East, too, morphine was becoming better known,



*Opium sleep*



and during the second half of the nineteenth century it threatened at one time to be a serious rival to raw and prepared opium. In Hong Kong, for example, dens were opened for morphine injections. Opium smokers, who went into these establishments, found that though injections were less convivial than smoking, they were cheaper, more secretive and the stimulus was more immediate.

Opium farmers in China, however, and the merchants whose incomes depended upon the trade in opium, and whose expensive equipment was made for the handling of opium, were naturally opposed to morphine injections. As a result, the consumers in the East were "driven back into orthodoxy." They were not allowed to forsake their pipes for the hypodermic syringe, and the Royal Commission later found that "there is every reason to suppose that the practice of morphine injecting has been practically stamped out in this colony (Hong Kong) an ordinance having been introduced to effect that object."

The wars of the nineteenth century made the method of injecting morphine popular. And the sufferings of these wars increased the demand for morphine as well as for opium. During the Civil War the poppy was cultivated; and opium and morphine were produced in many parts of the United States. During the Crimean War many English soldiers tried to forget the terrible conditions of their barracks by injecting themselves with morphine, and the Franco-Prussian War taught French and Prussian soldiers that they could find a temporary relief in morphine as readily as in alcohol.

By the time the dangers of the abuse of morphine and the hypodermic syringe had been fully grasped by the

medical profession and the intelligent lay public, morphine had made almost irreparable inroads into the health and the mental balance of Western peoples.

Dr. H. H. Kane, an American physician, who investigated the morphine situation in the United States, and who, in 1880, published a book on the *Hypodermic injection of Morphia*, summarized the position clearly when he wrote:

“There is no proceeding in medicine that has become so rapidly popular; no method of allaying pain so prompt in its action and permanent in its effect; no plan of medication that has been so carelessly used and thoroughly abused; and no therapeutic discovery that has been so great a blessing and so great a curse to mankind as the hypodermic injection of morphia.”

Before the century was over, another derivative of opium, even more marvellous as a medicine and far more devastating as a drug of addiction was to be discovered. This was heroin, which is morphine treated with acetic acid. Heroin was discovered by Dreser in 1898.

Again and again, when some “drug ring,” dealing illicitly in the derivatives of opium in our own day, is discovered by the police, the far-reaching effects of small quantities of heroin are made clear. The example of a firm in Naarden, Holland, which held a licence to manufacture and sell drugs for medicinal purposes in 1927 will illustrate this point. Through defects of the Dutch system of control this firm was able to smuggle out three tons of heroin and a ton of morphine in 1927 and the first six months of 1928. These three tons of heroin represented twenty-three million injections from a hypodermic syringe; a few

hundred of which alone sufficed to make almost as many addicts.

The tragic thing about the discovery of heroin was that, at first, hopeful physicians believed that it was an antidote which would cure individuals suffering from the morphine habit. Actually, however, as was soon realized, heroin was in itself the most dangerous derivative of opium as far as habit-forming was concerned.

Heroin is usually made up in pills, but it is often produced in a white powdery substance, not unlike cocaine, and it can be sniffed by the addict easily and without the slight pain of the hypodermic syringe. The heroin pills, too, are easy to take and to carry about.

It must have seemed to enlightened men and women who appreciated the menace of drugs that there was no hope. Every time the bad effect of an opium product was fully recognized, a new derivative appeared not only in the laboratory of scientists and in the medicine kit of honest doctors, but on the illicit market as well.

During the greater part of the nineteenth century the scientific knowledge of drugs was not great and the distribution and consumption of raw or prepared opium was still the outstanding problem. For many years after the invention of the hypodermic syringe, the public as a whole was not yet conscious of the dangers involved in this invention or in drugs in general and when people discussed drugs at all they usually thought of opium and the Opium Wars which England was still fighting with China in the East.

AFTER the first Opium War the Chinese were naturally not keen to do business with the English. The War and the Treaty of Nankin had not made them eager purchasers of English goods. The cotton manufacturers of Lancashire were disappointed, for they had been led to believe that after the cessation of hostilities a splendid new market would be opened up for their products.

The English merchants living in China did nothing to create a greater friendliness towards England and thus a greater demand for English goods. In fact, after the war, there were more Englishmen of Mr. Innes's type in China than ever before. Men like Lord Elgin, who went out in 1858, were thoroughly revolted by the behaviour of their countrymen.

“I have seen more to disgust me with my fellow-countrymen,” he wrote sadly in his diary, “than I saw during the whole course of my previous life, since I have found them in the East among populations too timid to resist and too ignorant to complain.”

In one way, however, the Chinese did resist. They did not buy English goods any more than they could help. As a result, in 1848, the House of Commons appointed a Select Committee to investigate trade relations with China. This Committee's report to Parliament was depressing; trade with China was practically at a standstill. The only prosperous branch of commerce was the illicit opium traffic.

"The opium trade," this Report states, "already flourishes at Foochowfoo, with its usual demoralizing influences on the population, and embarrassing effects upon the monetary condition of the place. The latter would be diminished by the legalization of the traffic; the former, we are afraid, are incontestable and inseparable from its existence."

Hong Kong, since the War, had become a well organized opium trading centre. Smugglers found a safe haven there and the city was conspicuous for the number of lawless men included in its population.

Chinamen and Englishmen in the illegal opium trade met freely in Hong Kong, and their business arrangements were facilitated by a colonial ordinance whereby Chinese in Hong Kong could acquire a British register. This meant that if these Chinamen owned a British ship they acquired the right to fly the British flag and were given the same protection granted British vessels.

The Chinese showed as firm an opposition to their own nationals among the opium smugglers as towards the Englishmen involved in the contraband traffic. There was considerable friction between the authorities and the smugglers and conditions were not very different from what they had been years earlier, before and during the

First Opium War. Now, in the sixties, the tension was really worse, because China was in a state of rebellion. The Imperialists and the Taipings, who, it might be mentioned, took an oath not to smoke opium, were attacking each other frequently, and domestic peace had not been restored despite the fact that, in 1853, Hung Siu-ts'uan had established the T'ai-p'ing dynasty and called himself the "Heavenly King."

England, too, had troubles of her own at this period of her history. The slackening of the China trade was merely one of the issues confronting the Cabinet. The Crimean War had not ended until 1856, and the Indian Mutiny which began in 1857 was a most urgent problem. Besides, plans for far-reaching changes in England's colonial policy were already in the air, and in 1858 the concessions of the East India Company were finally transferred to the Crown.

Opium and China had to await a decision. That was why, after the second Opium War had virtually begun with the so-called "Arrow" or "Lorcha" incident, the conflict was dragged on for such a long time.

This Arrow incident occurred on October 8th, 1856. On that morning a lorcha, that is to say a Chinese vessel of European build, rigged like a junk, called the *Arrow*, lay off Canton. She was flying the British ensign. A little after eight o'clock, four Chinese officers and sixty soldiers came on board the *Arrow*, hauled down the British flag and arrested the crew of twelve, all of whom were Chinese.

In common with many of these Chinese ships, which had obtained a British register, the *Arrow* was commanded by an Englishman. His name was Thomas Kennedy. At

the time of the raid he had been visiting the captain of another lorcha lying close to the *Arrow*. He returned to his ship before the Chinese officers and soldiers had left with the prisoners. Kennedy rehoisted the British flag and demanded the release of his crew. Kennedy was later assisted in his efforts by the British Consul in Canton, Harry S. Parkes, who contended in vain that the prisoners should be brought to the British Consulate for an inquiry.

The English were outraged, saying that the flag had been insulted and that the Chinese had broken the rules of the port. Sir John Bowring, the British representative in Canton, said that he would not be satisfied without a formal apology.

The Chinese Commissioner, Yeh, on the other hand, stated that the *Arrow* had been a pirate ship and that he raided her in order to arrest a well-known pirate, one Li-Ming-tai, who was amongst the crew. Yeh also claimed that the *Arrow* was owned by a Chinaman, Su Ah-Cheng, who had not acquired a British register.

The truth was that on October 8th, the *Arrow* no longer had the right to fly the British flag and that the Chinese were justified in their action. The *Arrow's* certificate of registry, which had to be renewed every year to remain in force, and which had been granted on September 27th, 1855, had expired eleven days before the *Arrow* incident.

These facts did not trouble Sir John Bowring. He wrote to Commissioner Yeh on October 14th, six days after the raid, that "there is no doubt that the lorcha, *Arrow*, lawfully bore the British flag under a register granted by me." But at the same time Bowring admitted in private letters to Parkes, the Consul, that this was not the case.

"It appears on examination," he wrote to Parkes, "that the *Arrow* had no right to hoist the British flag. The licence to do so expired on 27th September, from which period she has not been entitled to protection."

Bowring repeated this admission in another letter to Parkes, written the next day, October 12th:

"I will reconsider the regranting the register of the *Arrow* if applied for, but there can be no doubt that after the expiry of the licence, protection could not be legally granted."

If Sir John Bowring had wanted to maintain peace, he could, of course, have done so easily by being honest with Commissioner Yeh. But Bowring was obviously looking for a pretext again to declare war on the Chinese, thus gaining greater concessions for the English merchants in China. He was determined, if peaceful methods failed, to find another way of opening up Eastern markets for the products of Lancashire cotton spinners. Besides, another victorious war would probably at last force the Chinese to legalize the opium trade.

Despite his lack of frankness towards the Chinese, Sir John Bowring was not a hypocrite. He once cynically remarked, "that of course the magnitude of demands grows with our success. All diplomacy is the exemplification of the Sibyl's story—all wise diplomacy." And after the *Arrow* incident was virtually closed by an assurance from the Chinese that such a "mistake" would not occur again, Bowring suggested to Parkes that this affair might give the British an excuse to occupy Canton.

"Can we not use this opportunity," he wrote to the Consul, "to carry the City Question? If so, I will come

up with the whole fleet. I think we have now a stepping stone from which with good management we may move on to important consequences."

The Commander of the fleet, Admiral Seymour, however, was at first sceptical about Bowring's plan. Bowring was not sure that "the Admiral would make war," but in the end Bowring reported to Parkes that "the Admiral has left me in excellent disposition, and we must write a bright page in our history."

Admiral Seymour began "the bright page in our history" on October 23rd, by taking the Barrier forts, four miles below Canton city. The next day the forts along the Macao passage were captured and then Canton was easily taken.

The English and other foreigners were enraged by the Chinese acts of retaliation. These Westerners did not think it proper for the Chinese to defend themselves against the invaders. On January 14th, 1857, for instance, Commodore Armstrong, the American naval commander, protested to Commissioner Yeh against "the acts of assassination by which hostilities have lately been characterized."

As this protest shows, the United States, too, had wanted an excuse to take part in this war. The French also became England's allies. They entered the War because a French missionary had been killed.

Officially, war had not yet begun. Fighting was confined to the Canton district, and no more far-reaching steps could be taken until Parliament had decided whether or not war on China was to be formally declared.

The repercussions of the *Arrow* affair in Parliament were enormous. It was at this time that the Earl of

Shaftesbury submitted the whole question of the Indian manufacture and export of opium to Her Majesty's judges and that they upheld the opium traffic. For men like Shaftesbury were aware that the essential factor in our relations with China, the question of whether or not war should be declared, revolved round opium.

The *Arrow* case was put before the Law Lords, who could not agree. Lord Wensleydale and the Lord Chancellor declared that the *lorcha* had the right to fly the British flag, and that an attack on her meant an attack on British lives and property. Lord Lyndhurst and Lord St. Leonards, on the other hand, were convinced that in no respect did the *Arrow* have the right to be treated as a British vessel.

The disagreement in the House of Lords was equally sharp. In the division on February 26th, 1857 concerning the Government's motion to declare war on China, 146 members voted in favour of this motion and 110 against.

In the House of Commons, Cobden led the opposition to the declaration of War. Palmerston, who was again Prime Minister, had publicly declared, with even less tact than usual, that "an insolent barbarian wielding authority at Canton, violated the British flag, broke the engagement of treaties, offered rewards for the heads of British subjects in that part of China, and planned their destruction by murders, assassination, and poison."

Despite the force of Palmerston's language in his public utterances, the Government was defeated in the House of Commons on March 3rd, after a long debate, by 263 to 247 votes.

Parliament was dissolved, but Palmerston went to the country and was finally returned with a majority of 85.

War on China was declared. Naturally the English and their allies were victorious.

Later in the year Lord Elgin was sent to China to conclude the treaty of peace. The Treaty of Tientsin was signed on June 26th, 1858.

Again the subject of opium was not mentioned in the Treaty, but now it was clear that unless China finally agreed to legalize the trade, wars and skirmishes and disorders would continue indefinitely.

The Foreign Office admitted this fact. In confidential letters from the Foreign Office, Elgin was told that opium was one of the outstanding problems he was to solve. He was instructed to see that China legalized the trade. Early as April, 1857, when Elgin was preparing to go to the East, the Earl of Clarendon, who was then Foreign Secretary to Her Majesty's Government, wrote to him about opium.

The letter is headed "Foreign Office, April 20th, 1857."

"It will be for your Excellency," Clarendon wrote to Elgin, "when discussing commercial arrangements with any Chinese plenipotentiaries, to ascertain whether the Government of China would revoke its prohibition of the opium trade, which the high officers of the Chinese Government never practically enforce. Whether the legalization of the trade would tend to augment that trade may be doubtful, as it seems now to be carried on to the full extent of the demand in China, with the sanction and connivance of the local authorities. But there would be obvious advantages in placing the trade upon a legal footing by the imposition of a duty, instead of its being carried on in the present irregular manner."

Lord Elgin was a kind man, but apparently he was not very firm. He hated opium, and the human wrecks he saw in China increased his aversion to the illicit trade. Despite Clarendon's orders, Elgin tried to evade the issue. For months he refused to discuss the horrible subject of opium with anyone at all, and he welcomed an opportunity of visiting Japan as this made it possible for him to escape from China and opium.

Elgin might have returned to England without settling the opium question, if one of his fellow diplomats in China had not forced him to face the issue. This was W. B. Reed, the United States Ambassador to China.

Mr. Reed, who obviously thought that the whole problem of opium had been veiled in secrecy far too long, wrote a letter to Lord Elgin. Reed pointed out that only two courses were open to those concerned with opium. The first course was to urge "upon the Chinese authorities the active and thorough suppression of the trade by seizure or confiscation, with assurances that no assistance, direct or indirect, should be given to parties, English or American, seeking to evade or resist the process." In this connection Mr. Reed boldly added that assurances should be given the Chinese that the British Government would put a stop to the growth and export of opium from India.

Mr. Reed, who was familiar with the British Government's opium decisions, must have known that this source of revenue would never be surrendered, and that such a suggestion was of academic interest only.

The second course of action he suggested to Lord Elgin was more practical. This was that Elgin was to

persuade the Chinese Government to legalize the trade and to admit opium to the regular tariff of the country.

Now that the subject had thus been dragged out into the open by Mr. Reed, Lord Elgin, who still disliked dealing with this unpleasant matter himself, sent two delegates, Mr. Oliphant and Mr. Wade, to discuss it with the Chinese Treasurer, Mr. Wang.

China knew that she was beaten, not only by the English, but by her own corrupt officials. "China still retains her objections to the use of the drug on moral grounds," the official report from Lord Elgin's representatives read, "but the present generation of smokers, at all events, must and will have opium. To deter the uninitiated from becoming smokers, China would propose a very high duty; but as opposition would naturally be expected from us in that case, it should be made as moderate as possible."

Naturally, a high import duty on opium would have been unfavourable for the Indian exporters and thus for the Indian revenue. The Chinese proposed a duty of sixty taels a chest. Then they said they would compromise on a duty of forty, but Lord Elgin made them reduce this tariff to thirty taels a chest.

After much discussion, the legalization of opium at this tariff rate was accepted by the Chinese. Elgin had been successful.

The Treaty of Tientsin also legalized the preaching of the Christian religion in China. Two ends, therefore, had been accomplished. China had been forced to accept Opium and Christianity. The irony of this combination seemed to strike surprisingly few people.

SOME producers and exporters of Indian opium harboured the illusion that England's success in the Second Opium War and the Treaty of Tientsin would begin a new and more peaceful era of the trade. As opium was no longer a contraband article in China, these optimists argued, the continuous and enervating friction with the Chinese would cease, and the commerce in opium would be stabilized. This was not the case, however, because fresh and difficult problems confronted the distributors of the drug.

For opium had become a commodity of world commerce, and increasing competition was felt on all markets for the drug. Though the Indian poppy continued to yield the best quality, habitual buyers and smokers of opium were not discriminating and the British were beginning to fear the competition of opium grown outside India. Egypt, Turkey and Persia were developing their cultivation and export of it, and even in Mozambique in Africa, the Portuguese had granted a concession to an opium company.

In all Eastern countries, except Japan, the opium habit was spreading, creating new consumers, a new demand for the drug. In this connection, Japan's fierce and successful resistance to opium should be mentioned. Japanese laws against the drug were so severe that smoking never became a social evil in Japan. If her people and her army had been affected by opium as were the Chinese, the course of history in the East might have been very different during the last few decades. Considering how firm Japan has always been regarding her domestic opium problem, her international attitude has been all the more distressing. She has, in fact, the worst reputation in this respect of any country in the world. Lieutenant-Commander Fletcher, who mentioned Japan's present-day policy in the House of Commons expressed the opinion of a great many people. We quote from *The Times* of December 23rd, 1938. Lieutenant-Commander Fletcher said that "good will towards the suppression of the drug traffic has been shown by most Governments, but the Japanese Government had shown no good will in this matter. They fostered the consumption of drugs, not only in China, but all over the world, including Canada; and they smuggled cocaine into India. . . ."

During the decades after the Arrow War, this Japanese danger had not yet emerged. Other countries were worse offenders at that time. Throughout the East the demand for opium was growing, and production was increasing to meet this demand. Indian producers were no longer so sure of their position on the opium markets. It was becoming more difficult to judge what supply would be absorbed by exports. This uncertainty caused precarious

fluctuations of prices. To counteract this insecurity in the Indian revenue, the British Government, after the Arrow War, tried to decrease production systematically and to raise prices accordingly.

In 1859-60, British production in India was reduced to 21,323 chests, and sold at the huge price of Rs. 2,000 a chest, but this method proved to be a failure because a shortage of supplies resulted and in 1863-64, production was again increased to 64,000 chests.

These erratic production movements were felt not only on foreign markets, but in India and other countries of origin. Often the supply was greater than the export demand, and it was no longer easy to prevent the natives from becoming opium addicts and thus less efficient. Many of the Indians working in large opium factories, where opium balls were stored on shelves reaching from floor to ceiling of the warehouses, began to taste and then to take the drug regularly, and the British Government waged a constant fight against the spread of the habit amongst its native workmen.

Contact with Chinese labour stimulated the demand for opium, and in Burma, for instance, which the British finally acquired in 1852, there was considerable opium smoking. Besides, cheap Chinese labour was frequently imported from Macao and elsewhere into other countries in the sixties before the old coolie system was abolished in 1874. These coolies took their pipes with them wherever they went, and created a demand for opium in their new homes.

This new phase of the opium trade was very marked in the United States, because there was a growing employ-

ment of Chinamen in California. Dr. H. H. Kane reports that in 1846, for instance, there was a Chinese population of 117,331 in the United States. During the same year 228,742 pounds of gum opium and 53,189 pounds of prepared opium were imported into the country. About half of the total was estimated to be smoked, not by Chinese emigrants, but by Americans themselves. Clendenyn, a man described as a "sporting character", first established smoking-dens in California in 1868.

An Englishman's account of how opium thus began to be imported into Peru is typical of this expansion of the trade. This story is told about a friend by Hartmann Henry Sultzberger, an anglicized German opium merchant, whose book *All About Opium* was published in 1884. Mr. Sultzberger's friend went to Peru as secretary to a wealthy business man.

"At first," so Sultzberger tells us, "his principal's chief business consisted in the importation into Peru of Chinese coolies from Macao, which circumstance afforded my friend an early opportunity to acquaint himself with the Chinese habit of opium-smoking, and soon induced him to ask for a trial shipment of one or two cases of that drug as a small venture on joint account, which turned out so exceptionally profitable that I repeated the operation at frequent intervals, and on an increased sale, when the matter attracted the attention of his principal, and the business from a joint speculation between ourselves, changed into regular orders from the firm to be executed by me on the system of commission business pure and simple. The importation of these Chinese coolies having taken a rapid development, my orders steadily increased,

and soon attained such importance that without this intervention on the part of the firm, we could never have kept pace ourselves, with this increasing demand (for opium)."

The repercussions of the increasing world demand and supply, were felt in China. According to the Elgin Treaty an inland transit duty of from sixteen to eighty taels a chest had been allowed the Chinese provinces, and, after the Tientsin Treaty, China tried to impose an import duty of from thirty to forty taels a chest.

There were many influential men in China who continued bitterly to resent the policy of legalization which had been forced upon their country, and a high tariff rate meant that the drug would be more expensive on the inland markets and thus less accessible to the general public.

During the entire period of the Taiping rebellion when, on both sides, so many men were under arms, the effects of opium on the population of China were again distressingly obvious. An English officer described the Chinese forces fighting under General Gordon:

"They drink very little, they are great hands at languages . . . their great bane is opium; and I do not think it is possible for any of them who have taken it to give it up; consequently, by the time they are forty years of age, they are old men."

China was willing to make financial sacrifices for the sake of her people's health and welfare. Though some Englishmen accused her of wishing to increase the import duties on opium merely to increase her revenues, this was not the case. Sir Rutherford Alcock, the Ambassador

to China, admitted China's altruistic motives before the Select Committee on Indian Affairs of the House of Commons.

Alcock declared: "I have estimated the absolute interest of the Chinese Government in the Indian trade (in opium) at about a million and a half sterling; and in reference to this I may mention that not only in the conference that took place with the minister of the Tsungli Yamen, but also at different times, officially or privately, they have shown the greatest readiness to give up the whole revenue if they could only induce the British Government to co-operate with them in any way to put it down. My own conviction is firm, that whatever degree of honesty may be attributed to the officials and the Central Government, there is that in their words that they would not hesitate one moment, to-morrow if they could, to enter into an arrangement with the British Government, and say, 'Let our revenue go, we care nothing about it. What we want is to stop the consumption of opium, which we conceive is impoverishing the country, and demoralizing and brutalizing our people.'"

The Indian Government was not impressed by Sir Rutherford Alcock's statement. Men connected with the Indian opium trade were frightened when China suggested increasing import duties on opium. The Chinese imports from India would undoubtedly have fallen off had such a high tariff been introduced. Therefore, the British, determined not to allow China to impose these duties, decided to negotiate, if such a word can be used for the pressure that was then brought to bear on the Chinese.

In 1869, Sir Rutherford Alcock finished the draft of a

Commercial Convention with China. This Convention, which fixed the duties on opium, was not ratified by the Liberal Government which came into power in 1868, and the question of opium duties remained undecided. In the meantime, the smuggling of opium continued to a certain extent from Macao and Hong Kong. The Chinese stated that at this time they lost about £300,000 on opium shipped into China by the smugglers who evaded the customs houses, and until tariffs were finally fixed and conditions more stabilized, these dishonest practices were bound to continue.

It took a long time to settle the tariff. The duties on opium were discussed for years. The Chinese insisted on their right to impose duties on imports into their own country as they saw fit, but Great Britain and India continued vigorously to protest. In 1876, Sir Thomas Wade negotiated the Chefoo Convention in which the question of duties on opium was settled at last. According to this Convention, the inland transit duties and the import duties were to be collected together at the ports, and the total for every chest was to be 110 taels. This plan meant a loss to the revenues of individual Chinese provinces, but the import duties were, of course, much higher than they had been. In return for this permission to increase duties, the Chinese were to open four more of their ports to foreigners.

There was, however, such an outcry in India against this Convention that it was not finally ratified by England until February, 1885, when the Chinese had been made to introduce a total of 80 taels a chest at the ports for both inland transit and foreign duties. Sir Thomas Wade

did not deny that pressure had been brought to bear on the Chinese in connection with the Chefoo Convention.

"We are generally prone to forget," Wade wrote, "that the footing we have in China has been obtained by force, and by force alone, and that, unwarlike and unenergetic as we hold the Chinese to be, it is in reality to the fear of force alone, that we are indebted for the safety we enjoy at certain points accessible to our force . . . nothing that has been gained, it must be remembered, was received from the free-will of the Chinese. . . ."

In fact, the British Empire in general and India in particular, did not gain quite as much from the relatively low Chinese duties on opium as had been expected, for Chinamen had begun to cultivate opium in their own country, and this domestic product competed with Indian and other foreign opium on the Chinese markets.

Long before opium was legalized in China, and when men known to be growing poppy plants were sentenced to death, a certain amount of opium must have been produced secretly in the western and south-western provinces. As early as 1830, Shaou, a censor in the province of Chekiang, says in a report that the cultivation had spread considerably in his province during the twenties. The censor also mentions the growth of poppy plants in Fohkien, Kwang Tung and Yunnan. A year later, in 1831, an Englishman, Major Burney, who lived in Burma, stated that Chinese opium was brought by caravans to Ava. By 1836, according to another official Chinese report by Choo Tsun, the poppy "was cultivated all over the hills and the open country" in Yunnan.

By the sixties and seventies there had obviously been a marked increase in Chinese opium cultivation, though no definite statistics are available, as the Chinese Government continued to disapprove of poppy plantations and the harvests were concealed as far as possible from the authorities. In some quarters, however, domestic cultivation was already being recommended. In an article published in the *Peking Gazette* of January 4th, 1853, for instance, Wooting-Poo, a Government censor, speaks frankly of the domestic production of opium. He was in favour of it, as, in time, he believed, Chinese opium would exclude the Indian product from domestic markets.

In 1868, the Indian Board of Revenue was sufficiently worried to send a secretary to China to investigate Chinese opium production. Mr. N. Nusserwabjee, this secretary, was very depressed by what he found. He could not compile accurate figures, as "different persons mentioned different quantities" of domestic production, but he came to the conclusion that not less than 40,000 pounds of opium were produced in 1868. He also reported that the native opium was better in quality and stronger in consistency than it had been some years before.

Mr. Nusserwabjee saw many Chinamen mixing their own opium with only small quantities of the drug from Bengal or Malwa, and he realized that, in time, they would develop a taste for the home product. This was a frightening thought, and the secretary urged the Indian Board of Revenue to take drastic steps.

"Under these circumstances," he suggested, "I beg to submit whether it will not be desirable, both for the interests of Government and the merchants and cultivators

of India, to send in future such increased quantities of opium to China, and at such low prices, as to prevent indigenous cultivation and competition."

The Chinese opium crop was, as an English contemporary pointed out, "a sword of Damocles, always hanging over our heads, and rendering a secure enjoyment of the Indian monopoly revenue impossible."

The fear of this Chinese competition became articulate when the price of the native Chinese product dropped far below the price of Indian imports. In some inland parts of China, in 1870, Indian opium was extremely expensive, literally "worth its weight in silver," whereas the Chinese opium was only tenpence for a Chinese ounce. This meant that for a penny, an ordinary smoker could buy his day's supply of the drug. Many English business men were not only frightened by this Chinese competition; they were annoyed as well. They felt that somehow or other they owned China, and that she had no right to compete in any way with the Indian opium.

An article which appeared on the Revenues of India in the *Quarterly Review* for January, 1871, reflected this point of view. The writer of this article complained about the domestic production of opium in China and then continued in a curiously frank and brutal manner: "The only financial consolation (for this Chinese competition) has been the belief that the appetite of the Chinese for the drug was also extending so rapidly as to absorb both the native and the Indian drug. . . ."

Many Chinamen, though for different reasons, were equally alarmed by the domestic opium cultivation. The Government, in fact, was actively against it. For apart

from the fact that the home product increased the consumption of the drug, and thus illness, degeneration and poverty amongst the consumers, the poppy cultivation presented a serious agricultural problem.

Some of the land which should have been used for food crops was planted with poppy, so that in certain districts a food shortage frequently resulted. During famine years this was a most serious matter. In a Consular Report from Shanghai, in 1873, Medhurst, the British Consul, reported an alarming situation.

"The easy production of the drug," he wrote, "and the remunerative returns it gives . . . tend to engross the attention of the agriculturists and to sap nearly every other industry."

Three years before this, in 1870, the Censor Yew-Peh-Ch'wan had already warned his people against growing opium. He claimed that the production of the poppy was the greatest obstacle to the production of foodstuffs in China, and declared that 10,000 mow (6 mow is an acre) of land was under poppy cultivation at that time. The Censor mentioned cases of suicide; people had taken their lives, desperate from starvation, because, though they had money to buy food, only opium was available in their district.

"The evil caused by opium smoking," Yew-Peh-Ch'wan pleaded in his memorial, "is worse than the destruction caused by floods, or the ravages of wild beasts."

Naturally, this accusation against opium, which was all too true, was reflected in the attitude of intelligent Chinamen towards England and the British merchants in China, for the Chinese could not have been expected to forget



*Hollow metal buttons used for drug smuggling*



that the English originally brought the opium habit to their country.

The English residents in China, on the other hand, seemed to find it difficult to forget that they had been victorious in two wars. They were resentful when the Chinese began to compete with them on the Chinese opium market with their domestic product, and many foreign merchants in China considered it most unfair of the Chinese to want higher import duties.

The relations between the English and their Chinese hosts was extremely bad during the sixties and seventies. Opium, the original and outstanding cause of their disputes, continued to loom up dangerously. The drug was in fact moulding Sino-British relations as it had in the past. And the fact that after the Arrow War, opium and Christianity were linked together, made it difficult for English missionaries to preach Christianity in China.

In common with European merchants, missionaries had been given extra-territorial rights by the Treaty, that is to say, their prestige and their privileges were defended by force, if this was thought necessary.

Enlightened and sincere men and women among the missionaries were, of course, deeply distressed by the situation. Some of the missionaries stationed along the coast where the smuggling trade could be continuously observed, begged Queen Victoria to improve conditions. Their Petition to the Queen, however, had no effect. These missionaries had written to Queen Victoria:

“It is a matter of the deepest regret to those of Your Majesty’s subjects who have devoted their efforts and their energies to the diffusion of the light of Christianity

among a people plunged in heathen darkness—a regret which they cannot doubt will touch a chord of sympathy in the hearts of Your Majesty and of Your Majesty's Christian subjects—that all the efforts made by these Your Majesty's faithful subjects to affect the conversion of the natives are absolutely neutralized by the existence and continuation of this anti-Christian traffic. Indeed, the Chinese say, and very naturally so, 'How can we be favourably impressed by your professed desire to enlighten our minds and ameliorate our condition, temporal as well as eternal, when simultaneously we have before our eyes such palpable proofs of the efforts your countrymen are making to destroy us, body and soul?"

Many of the English missionaries in China were not as sincere as the men who drafted this Petition. Some of them, in fact, were not only patronizing towards the Chinese, but overbearing as well. Their extraterritorial rights had gone to their heads, and in their manner towards the Chinese they resembled Mr. Innes.

These unpleasant Christians were chiefly responsible for making all missionaries, as well as Christianity, extremely unpopular in China. H. B. Morse, who is certainly objective in his attitude towards the entire opium problem, summarized existing conditions well when he wrote that in the minds of the Chinese:

"The missionaries were coupled with opium, not because both were foreign evils, nor because the brute force which, as her statesmen held, had forced the one on the country, had also forced the other; but because they were, they contended, two evils, upheld by foreign force, which, one equally with the other, interfered with

the proper administration of the provinces, and brought disorder in their train."

It must have been a shock to believing and upright Christians in England and other European countries to learn what Prince Kung said to Sir Rutherford Alcock when he left Peking in 1869.

Prince Kung said: "Take away your opium and your missionaries and you will be welcome."

In the seventies public opinion in England was finally roused about the opium traffic. Humane men and women were appalled by reports of the devastating effects of this trade on China and the dangers of the opium habit to the native population of India.

In the debate on opium in the House of Commons on May 10th, 1870, R. B. Fowler had been one of several members to tell the public that “wherever opium grows it is eaten, and the more it is grown the more it is eaten. . . . We are demoralizing our own subjects in India. One half of the crimes in the opium districts—murders, rapes and affrays—have their origin in opium eating. One opium eater demoralizes a whole village.”

A reform movement was developing against the Empire’s cultivation and export of opium, but the time for such agitation was inauspicious. For the opium revenue which had been less than a million pounds when the trade was sanctioned by Parliament in 1832, had grown tremendously

and had become a vital factor in the Indian budget. In 1862 it amounted to five million pounds, and when the organized agitation for reform began in 1870, it was £6,733,215.

The relative importance of opium in the Indian finances is shown by the figures for 1871-72. During that fiscal year the total revenue of India was £50,110,215; the expenditures were £48,614,512. This meant a surplus of £1,495,703.

In the same year, 1871-72, the revenue from opium £7,657,213, that is to say almost one sixth of the total revenue of India was derived from opium. Opium in other words was one of the most important pillars of the Empire.

Englishmen who took the trouble to study Indian statistics must have been deeply shocked by this fact. It must have been a frightening thought, and a disillusionment, to learn that the Indian Empire to the extent of almost a sixth, was financially built up on the demoralization of millions of human beings in China. Reformers who became interested in the subject of opium knew that they confronted no easy task, for the Empire had gone too far to give up opium: without the opium revenue in 1871-72, which was a typical year, the surplus of one million and a half would have been altered to a deficit of six millions.

“Next to the land revenue,” Sir John Strachey wrote a few years later in his book on India, “the most productive source of the public income in India is opium.”

These facts and figures did not deter progressive people in England who were determined to rid the country of this disgraceful source of income. A Society for the

Suppression of the Opium Trade was founded in 1874. Lord Shaftesbury was the first President, and, during the first decade of the Society's existence, it was extremely active.

The moving spirit behind the Society was that quietly great man, Joseph Grundy Alexander, so refreshing to remember in our own age, when boisterous prominence is not uncommon. Joseph Grundy Alexander was a Quaker, whose absolute integrity could not be questioned even by successful opium traders and others in the opposite camp.

The Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade published a magazine, the *Friends of China*, established branches in cities and towns all over England, raised money, supported motions against the opium trade in the House, called meetings to enlighten the general public about the opium evil, and organized petitions to Parliament. In 1882, for instance, 489 petitions, signed by men and women from various professions, were presented to the House by the Society.

In 1870, the Society arranged for Sir Wilfred Lawson to put a motion to the House: "That this House condemns the system by which a large portion of the Indian revenue is raised by opium."

This motion was defeated: 47 members supporting Sir Wilfred Lawson, 151 voting against him and for the Government policy.

Undaunted, the Society continued to put pressure on Parliament. In 1875, Sir J. Mark Stewart moved that "the imperial policy regulating the opium traffic between India and China should be carefully considered by her Majesty's

Government, with a view to the gradual withdrawal of the Government of India from the cultivation and manufacture of opium." 57 members voted for the motion; 94 against.

Despite these parliamentary defeats the Society continued its work. In 1881, a meeting was arranged at the Mansion House. Thirty branches of the Society in as many cities and towns sent delegates and the speakers on the platform, including the Archbishop of Canterbury and Cardinal Manning, were a formidable body.

The Archbishop opened the meeting by declaring that the opium trade carried on between India and China was "opposed to international and Christian morality," and Cardinal Manning who had been entrusted with a motion regarding the opium situation in Burma, which he considered "a disgrace to our Government in India," called upon the conscience of the whole nation to stop this trade.

Cardinal Manning's speech must have made many good patriots, who liked to believe in a sound foundation of the Empire, feel extremely uncomfortable.

"I do not know," Manning said, "how those who coolly discuss the subject of opium upon the ground of the finances of India, conceive of the great empire which the providence of God has raised up and committed to our hands. If they look upon it simply as a great mart for commerce, or a great field for the exercise of arms, or if it be a mere bubble for the vain-glory of an insular people, then I can quite understand that they may be apathetic when the facts of the opium traffic are brought before us. . . . But if we believe that with this imperial greatness

comes an imperial responsibility, and that no man can discharge himself from his share in it—that every Englishman, Irishman, Scotsman, is part and parcel of the great British Empire, and that as we partake of its weal and its woe, we partake also of its evil and its good, and that we must be responsible for the share we have in it—then I confess that I do not think it possible that any man can discuss it as it was discussed the other day, I am sorry to say, from first to last, upon the sole and only ground of finances."

Possibly some members of the Government and many Government supporters were impressed by anti-opium utterances like Cardinal Manning's. Possibly, too, some of these men in positions of responsibility regretted the human suffering caused by the opium trade in China and elsewhere. But they were increasingly aware that, without radically altering the finances of India, nothing could be done, and no one in the Government had sufficient courage or humanity to propose this revision of financial policy, which would have meant a considerable economic loss to a great many people.

The Government had been consistently tactful and non-committal in response to the anti-opium agitation. In 1876, Lord Salisbury had cautiously informed an anti-opium delegation that at least the Government had no intention of extending the cultivation or the trade of the drug in India.

Salisbury frankly told this delegation that he was not opposed to the opium traffic, except as it involved "inconveniences of principle." He said:

"Without taking the view as to its (the opium trade's)

moral condemnation which is held by many persons present, I feel that there are inconveniences of principle connected with it which have prevented any government in the present day from introducing it. I entirely disclaim any intention to push the Bengal system further."

In other words, Salisbury and the Government had no intention of curtailing the cultivation or trade in opium. All that opponents of the traffic were allowed to hope for was that the Indian production would not be increased.

Naturally, business men involved in the opium trade were troubled by the anti-opium agitation, and large sections of the Press supported them and the Government policy. Considerable pro-opium propaganda appeared in newspapers and periodicals. These articles contended that opium was harmless, that the drug was less dangerous than "the alcoholic stimulants used by Western nations." In fact, and this argument appeared frequently in the pro-opium Press, "the opium sot had a decided advantage over the drunkard, not being noisy, quarrelsome, and often dangerous as the other was."

The following article, from the *Pall Mall Gazette*, of November 13th, 1879, was so typical of the sort of propaganda published at the time that it seems worth quoting in full:

"Opium smoking is viewed with such horror by a large class of persons that anything said in its favour is not likely to raise the practice in general estimation; Consul Gardner, nevertheless, in his trade report on Chefoo, for the past year, boldly comes forth to defend it. As the question of the morality of the opium trade in China seems, he says, to be exciting much attention at home, and as influential

persons have expressed opinions on the subject founded, he conceives, on misinformation and misconception, a few facts may not be out of place.

"Opium smokers are of three classes: 1st, occasional smokers; 2nd, habitual smokers, who smoke in moderation but have not got a craving; 3rd, habitual smokers who smoke in excess and have a craving. When it is said of a Chinaman that he smokes opium, it is meant that he belongs to the third class, just as with us the expression that a man 'drinks' means that he drinks too much. Sir Thomas Wade is stated to have estimated the number of opium-smokers in China to be five per cent of the adult population. If this estimate includes the first and second class, Consul Gardner thinks it is too low; if it refers only to the third class, he would say it was too high. The average amount of Indian opium consumed in China is about 12,000,000 lbs. per annum, and probably 5,000,000 lbs. more of native opium is produced. In smoking only a portion of the opium is consumed: the ash is re-prepared, and yields fifty per cent opium. It is this ash that enables the opium saloon to sell the preparation apparently at cost price, the ash paying for the light, attendance, house-rent and profit. Deducting the unconsumed opium, few moderate smokers consume more than a pound and a half a year, while the most immoderate smoker does not consume more than four pounds; and it would probably be about correct to reckon half a pound per head as the average annual consumption of all classes of smokers. This would bring the number of smokers up to about half the adult population. Then the question arises, 'If opium smoking is the great evil it is represented to be, how is it that

after so many years no inherited ill effects are visible?" Most of our medical knowledge has been obtained empirically, and the greatest achievements in the sciences of chemistry and physiology often consist in merely giving the reason for facts already known by experience. Physiology teaches us that the length of the intestines in an animal is correlated with its diet; vegetable feeders have long, and animal feeders have short intestines. The length of the intestines in man shows that a due admixture of animal and vegetable food is the diet best suited to him. In China the population lives almost entirely on vegetables. Opium smoking 'slows' the processes of digestion, and, in fact, has the same effect as long intestines, and, consequently, is highly beneficial. Again, the Chinese live in undrained grounds, and in conditions favourable to ague and low types of fever. It is well known that under similar circumstances the inhabitants of the lowlands of Lincolnshire took to laudanum. It is not surprising that the Chinese should take to opium in another form. Every foreign resident in China is struck with the comparative immunity of the population from diseases of the bronchial tubes and lungs. That this immunity is not due to climatic influences is clearly proved by the fact that Europeans and Americans are not more free from the scourge there than in their own countries. Morphia is known to be an anaesthetic. It is probably, also, in the rarefied form of smoke, an antiseptic. In this form it would tend to arrest the suppuration of the lungs that takes place in consumption, acquired personally or inherited. Early marriages in China cause bad habits to be less rife there than in England or America. Now,

a fair test of the above theories would be supplied by a class of natives who were married late and were debarred from opium smoking. The Protestant Christians supply exactly this test. No opium smokers are allowed the privilege of membership of the Church, and early marriages among them are greatly discouraged. The outdoor games and occupations which impart a healthy tone to the minds and bodies of our youth of both sexes are not resorted to by the Chinese. Bad habits would consequently be more prevalent among those who married late, and the result is precisely what might be expected: 'An enormous percentage of deaths of native Protestant Christians due to consumption.' During Consul Gardner's residence in China he has spent much time in visiting the opium shops of the large towns and small villages in many parts of the empire, entering into conversation with the customers. He was surprised at the large numbers who told him that their first motive for smoking was to check the spitting of blood, to which they had become subject. Consul Gardner, at the end of 1865, being attacked with a severe fever, which left him so weak that he gave up all hopes of recovery, felt justified in trying upon himself the experiment of immoderate opium smoking. He gives an interesting account of the results of this indulgence—one among them being 'utter indifference to cares and anxieties.' He suddenly gave up the habit and suffered severe physical pain for three days, and discomfort at irregular periods for over two years, but no mental depression. That many individuals suffer in health from excess in opium smoking is incontrovertible; but the number of these, he is inclined to think, is not so great

as imagined. The denouncers of the drug are apt to get under the influence of a fixed idea, or to speak in vulgar parlance, 'they get opium on the brain,' and whenever they see a person unwell who happens to be an opium smoker, they at once attribute his illness to his habit of smoking opium—'*Post hoc ergo propter hoc.*' On the other hand, it is equally incontrovertible that thousands of hardworking people are indebted to opium smoking for the continuance of lives agreeable to themselves and useful to society."

More serious periodicals and newspapers, too, upheld the view that opium was not a social danger, nor a danger to public health. *The Times*, too, expressed this opinion.

A Mr. George Birdwood wrote two very long letters on the subject (*The Times*, December 26th, 1881, and January 20th, 1882), and though his staunch defence of the opium traffic appeared in the correspondence section, *The Times* must have approved of the writer's viewpoint or so much space would not have been given to him.

In these articles, for such in fact these letters are, Mr. Birdwood differentiated between habitual eating or drinking of opium and innocent smoking. He did not mention the habit-forming properties of the drug. Instead he declared that casual pipes can be smoked without harm and that the smoker can give up the drug at any moment he wishes to do so.

"In view of the undiscriminating agitation," Mr. Birdwood wrote, "which is being manufactured all over the country against the Indian opium revenue (amounting to from £7,000,000 to £9,000,000 sterling a year) on the ground of its imputed immorality, I wish to place on

record the opinions which I have been led, by years of intimate study and observation in Bombay, to form of the effects of the habitual use of opium on the people of the East. . . . As regards opium smoking, I can from experience testify that it is, of itself, absolutely harmless. I should like those who have been led to believe, on the scientific observations of others, that it is harmful, to simply try it experimentally for themselves, under proper precautions, of course, against the risk of using imperfectly prepared *chandoo*, or 'smokable extract' of opium. I feel satisfied that the more thoroughly they test it, the more strongly will they be convinced with me that the smoking of opium is, of itself, a perfectly innocuous indulgence. I have known cases of desperate suffering, resulting apparently from excess in opium-smoking, such as unscientific observers hold up *in terrorem* before the British public. But these cases were always of moral imbeciles, who were addicted to other forms of depravity, and the opium pipe was merely the last straw laid on their inherently enervated and overstrained backs."

" . . . all I insist on," Mr. Birdwood wrote in another passage of this same letter, "is the downright innocence, in itself, of opium-smoking; and that, therefore, so far as we are concerned in its morality, whether judged by a standard based on a deduction from preconceived religious ideas or an induction from national practices, we are as free to introduce opium into China and to raise a revenue from it in India, as to export our cotton, wool, and iron manufactures to France."

In our own day, when no reputable newspaper would print an advertisement for dangerous drugs of any kind,

the public is educated to the dangers of playing with narcotics in the manner recommended by Mr. Birdwood, and it is inconceivable that the readers of the daily Press would be advised to experiment with opium. At the time, however, statements of men like Mr. Birdwood, who had been in the East, had an unfortunately soothing influence on the conscience of the general public. The Indian opium trade was an unpleasant subject which people were glad to forget. India and China were very far away, and Englishmen at home were willing to let the Government decide what to do about opium.

The less enthusiastic members of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, too, were not as interested as they had been. The membership of the Society declined and in the late eighties it could no longer afford to employ a paid secretary. Had it not been for the unflagging efforts of a few individuals, chief amongst whom was John Grundy Alexander, the opium issue might have been forgotten. This, of course, was what the Government and the opium traders had hoped would happen.

Fighters like Alexander, however, never gave up faith in their countrymen's fundamental sense of justice and humanity, nor their own belief that, ultimately, England, China, and other civilized countries, would finally make an effort to stop the spread of drug addiction. And it is symptomatic of the determination of these reformers that they rallied their forces and achieved their first constructive victory at a moment when to many outsiders the battle against opium seemed lost and the battlefield abandoned.

In 1889 Alexander took over the secretaryship of the Society, and after that a new vitality came into the movement.

In 1886, Sir J. W. Pease had put forward a motion in the House of Commons regarding the opium trade, but this motion was not carried. In 1889, another motion against the trade was made by Mr. Samuel Smith, and this motion, too, was not successful. Then, in 1891, Sir J. W. Pease brought in another motion, and this was carried: 160 members voting for it and 130 against.

This anti-opium motion of 1891, in which the House voted "on the opinion that the system by which the Indian opium revenue is raised is morally indefensible," was a moral victory only, because an amendment to the motion, proposed at once by Sir Robert Fowler, was not acceptable to the House and Pease's motion did not become a resolution. Fowler's amendment would have pledged the House to re-imburse the Indian Government for any deficiencies caused by the suppression of trade, and the Commons were unwilling to take this far-reaching responsibility.

In 1893, Sir J. W. Pease's motion was followed up by Mr. Alfred Webb who again proposed that the House should declare the opium trade to be "morally indefensible." Mr. Webb's motion went beyond Sir J. W. Pease's. Webb urged the Indian Government to cease granting opium licences, and to adopt measures for arresting the transit of Malwa opium through British territory.

Webb was quite aware that a sudden change of the Government's opium policy might involve the people of India in "oppressive taxation," and he therefore proposed that a Royal Commission be appointed and sent to India to investigate and report on the whole opium situation.

The Government realized that in response to Mr.

Webb's motion, or rather in response to the weight of public opinion gathering behind it, action could no longer be postponed.

Gladstone, who as a young man had so courageously opposed the Indo-Chinese opium trade, had obviously changed his mind about opium. He now defended the Government policy. And the Earl of Kimberley, the Secretary of State for India, threatened to resign if any resolution endangering the Indian opium revenue was passed by the House. The Government, to put it bluntly, was frightened.

Gladstone acted promptly. He answered Mr. Webb by proposing a counter-resolution. The phrasing of this counter-resolution was very carefully worded. It provided for the appointment of a Royal Commission, and, in the end, many members, glad to pass on the responsibility of this difficult problem to the Government, voted for Gladstone's resolution instead of for Mr. Webb's. Gladstone's resolution was carried by 184 votes to 105 votes. (It should be remembered in this connection that the House was dominated by an urgent issue at this time: the Home Rule Bill.)

This was Mr. Gladstone's resolution: he proposed that the Queen should appoint a Royal Commission which was to go to India and report on the following points:

“(1) Whether the growth of the poppy and manufacture and sale of opium in British India should be prohibited, except for medicinal purposes, and whether such prohibition could be extended to the Native States;

“(2) The nature of the existing arrangement with the Native States in respect of transit of opium through British

territory, and on what terms, if any, these arrangements could be with justice terminated;

“(3) The effect on the finances of India of the prohibition of the sale and export of opium, taking into consideration (a) the amount of compensation payable, (b) the cost of the necessary preventive measures, (c) the loss of revenue;

“(4) Whether any change short of total prohibition should be made in the system at present followed for regulating and restricting the opium traffic, and for raising a revenue therefrom;

“(5) The consumption of opium by the different races, and in the different districts of India, and the effect of such consumption on the moral and physical condition of the people;

“(6) The disposition of the people of India in regard to (a) the use of opium for non-medical purposes, (b) their willingness to bear in whole or in part the cost of prohibitive measures.”

The appointment of this Royal Commission really meant a victory for the Government, because in common with many of its kind, this Commission was virtually a substitute for action.

“I have witnessed the appointment of a great number of Commissions,” Lord Salisbury once wrote, “but my impression is that a very small percentage have received any notice from the legislators or from Parliament. . . . I think I know several Commissions now pending that have not the slightest probability of action.”

When the membership of the Commission became known, it was obvious that it would be quite ineffectual. All the members but one were supporters of the Govern-

ment. Besides, the Commission was not allowed freely to investigate conditions in India, or to choose their own itinerary or witnesses. They were shown only what the Government wished them to see. In the summer of 1893, before they left for India, the Secretary of State for India sent a cable to the Viceroy, asking him to organize the course of inquiry, places to be visited, and witnesses to be summoned.

The utter dependence of the witnesses on the official point of view was apparent from the very beginning. Lieutenant-Colonel Abbot, for instance, outlined the questions to be asked by the Commission in the Rajputana States. Abbot declared quite frankly:

“I propose that all witnesses be examined at the headquarters by the Durbars, with the aid of political Officers, and that the written replies of the Durbars to the questions asked them be based on the information which these witnesses supply. These same witnesses should, of course, be sent to appear before the Commission, and should reach Ajmare a week in advance of it, in order that I may become acquainted with all, and see if each one understands on what points he is required to give evidence.”

In other words, to describe the situation mildly, it was suggested to witnesses what they were to say. It is not surprising, therefore, that when they reached India, Sir Henry J. Wilson, the one independent member, found it difficult to get at the truth. Joseph G. Alexander, who went with him as an expert, and Wilson had made themselves unpopular by refusing to travel with the Commission. These two men sailed for India before the others left England, hoping in this way to approach objective

witnesses before the supervised tour of the Commission began. But from native officials Alexander and Wilson learned very little, for, as Alexander remarked in a private letter from India to his family at home, those officials "who run counter to its (the Government's) views cut themselves off from most of the best positions."

As this passage shows, most of the witnesses who appeared before the Commission were biased. If unexpectedly frank men or women came forward, their testimony was toned down in the Commission's report.

The subject of infant mortality in India in connection with opium addiction is typical of the prejudices with which this report was prepared.

The report merely says that "a few witnesses, chiefly missionaries, stated before us that they believed this practice (giving opium to infants) to be productive of great infant mortality."

A casual reader glancing through the Report would have accepted this minimizing statement of conditions, for it would take a certain amount of trouble to find that actually over twenty experienced witnesses, apart from missionaries, had referred to infant mortality due to the drug.

The testimony of missionaries was not greatly respected by the Commission, though many of them knew India extremely well. Missionaries were considered to be prejudiced against opium, or, as this attitude was expressed in the Commission's Report: "We are bound to take notice of the circumstances that most of the missionary witnesses were total abstainers, and some were ardent workers in the cause."

As the testimony of such "biassed" witnesses was brushed aside by the Commission, it is very natural that, viewing the situation in India as a whole, the members of the Commission, with the exception of Sir Henry Wilson, reported that everything was satisfactory.

The Commission "found the evil effects of opium in India greatly exaggerated." Mill-owners testified to "the general prevalence of moderation," though this optimistic point of view seemed to be contradicted in another statement in the Report that "if the supply of opium were suddenly stopped (among the natives), nearly all consumers over fifty years of age would be dead within a month."

These inconsistencies did not trouble the members of the Commission. They compared the consumption of opium in India with the "temperate use of alcohol in England" and emphasized that the Indian revenue could not "afford the financial loss that would result from a prohibition of opium."

The Commission declared with great pride, and as though the Chinese trade had not been one of the outstanding issues put forward by the anti-opium members in the House, that "the quantity of both Bengal and Malwa opium exported to China and the Far East is . . . far larger than that consumed in India, to which it bears the proportion of about twelve to one."

The members of the Commission refused to take any responsibility about China. They declared frankly in this connection that "they did not feel that they were called upon as a Commission to pass a judgment on the disputed facts of history, nor were they qualified to do so."

They did feel qualified, however, to blame China and

China alone for allowing her subjects to take opium. Anyone reading the Commission's report who was unfamiliar with the East India Company's and the British Government's trade monopoly would have thought that England had nothing whatsoever to do with the Chinese opium trade. If the Chinese Government wanted to stop opium, the Report declared, they should take action.

"We agree," says the Report, "in not recommending any action tending to the destruction of the trade, but if at any time the Chinese Government declares its wish to prohibit the import . . . we shall hold ourselves at liberty to reconsider it."

The appointment of the Commission had been a very clever move on the part of the Government. The pro-opium contents of the Report helped to instil into the general public the Government's point of view, and, though the hearings before the Commission had begun in Calcutta late in 1893, the Report was not published until April, 1895, and, in the meantime, nothing could be done about the matter in the House.

Besides, the Report was more than 2,500 pages long and few people had the leisure or the patience to study this large volume. But to make sure that anyone interested would read a summary of this Government Report, *The Times* of April 22nd, 1895 (three days before the Report itself was published and presented to Parliament!) published a long summary of it. Other papers quoted from this article in *The Times*, and the public, therefore, reading these more or less official reports of the Report, was satisfied that the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade had made much ado about relatively little.

It took the Society ten long years to recuperate from this smashing defeat. By 1906, however, the Society had again rallied its forces, and over two hundred candidates for the General Election of that year promised to support the anti-opium cause in the House if they were elected.

On May 30th, 1906, T. C. Morley brought forward a motion similar to those proposed years before: "That this House reaffirms its conviction that the Indo-Chinese opium trade is morally indefensible, and requests His Majesty's Government to take such steps as may be necessary for bringing about its speedy close."

This time the Government half-heartedly responded and John Morley, Secretary of State for India, again putting the blame and the responsibility for the trade on China, declared that ". . . if China wanted seriously and in good faith to restrict the consumption of this drug . . . the British Government would not close the door. . . ."

By this vague promise, Morley temporarily quietened the Opposition. He was pleased with his own diplomacy. "There has been an extraordinary amount of steam up," he wrote at this time, "both in England and Scotland against our share in the opium business, and the pledges given at the elections so firm that, if the anti-opium motion had gone to division, it would have been carried by a majority of 200. It required a little steering. . . ."

. . . . .

Careful steering of all Western Governments had indeed become necessary, as morphine and the other derivatives of opium had made the cultivation of the poppy a world problem. Relatively small quantities of morphine

could create such great demoralization among the white populations of the West, and could so easily be legally or illegally transported from one country to another that something, obviously, had to be done about it.

As early as the forties, France had regulated the sale and use of opium and its dangerous alkaloids by law. In the United States many states had enacted legislation concerning drugs, and when, after the Spanish-American War, in 1898, the Philippines went to the United States, opium became a colonial as well as a domestic problem. Dr. Hamilton Wright, an American physician, was the most active man in this American anti-drug campaign.

The world concern in the opium problem made it imperative for the British Empire not only to steer carefully but to take some action. In response to Morley's promise that England would not close the door on China, should she wish to decrease her own poppy cultivation, the Chinese Government, in the autumn of 1906, issued an edict providing for the abolition of the opium cultivation in China within a period of ten years. In 1908 this edict resulted in an agreement with Great Britain, according to which Indian exports of opium to China were to be gradually reduced over a period of three years if China, in return, decreased her own cultivation and her imports from other countries accordingly.

Both countries made a serious effort to carry out this agreement. In India, the gradual cessation of exports to China made necessary a fundamental readjustment of the crops and distribution of both "provision" (export) and "excise" (domestic consumption) opium. At first it was not always easy to reduce the areas under cultivation, as



*Russell Pasha*



the Indian peasants had been dependent on opium crops for so many years. Finally, however, these *ryots* learned how to grow other crops, and from 1910 to 1920, for example, the Indian Opium Agency reported that it was necessary, especially when the demand was great during the War, to offer cultivators special inducements before they would again cultivate enough opium land to satisfy the Government demand.

After the China trade stopped, the Indian revenue from opium was about 30 million rupees every year. The total Indian revenue was about £90,000,000, so that opium represented about 2.5 per cent of the total, certainly a tremendous drop as compared with the relative profits to the Indian Government in the nineteenth century.

By efficient management, the Indian Government succeeded for many years in maintaining a revenue of about 2.5 per cent, even after the Chinese market was cut off. In the "Statistical Abstract for British India," opium is still listed as one of the "principal heads" of revenue, though in recent years revenue from opium is often as little as 1.6 per cent. To maintain even this percentage there has been a great increase of prices for both provision and excise opium. The domestic consumption of opium in India, chiefly of the "eaten" opium, was more affected by this rise in prices than the excise. When China exports first decreased the price per chest was between 1,500 and 2,000 rupees. Now it is about 4,000 rupees.

China, as well as India, confronted a great economic as well as social problem when she decided to cut herself off from Indian exports and to decrease her own cultivation of the drug. China was more successful in her efforts

earlier in this century, before the Great War and before, after it, her administrative machine was so frequently disrupted by internal and foreign wars.

Early in the century, in fact, before men and women concerned with the anti-opium movement had realized how wars can stimulate the increase of the opium traffic, people were unduly optimistic. Besides, many reformers, who had been connected with the fight against opium, were accustomed to think of this struggle in terms of opium smuggling, which was, of course, far easier to track down than the illicit trade of tiny packages of morphine or heroin which could be concealed in the heels of shoes or the crowns of hats.

Certain hard-headed individuals, however, chief amongst whom was President Theodore Roosevelt, realized that the trade in opium and drugs could not be controlled by individual countries. In 1909, therefore, the first international congress to discuss opium and its alkaloids as well as other drugs was summoned at Shanghai. Austro-Hungary, China, France, Germany, the British Empire, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Persia, Portugal, Russia, Siam and the United States of America were represented. Turkey, one of the important opium growing countries, refused to send a delegate. The Shanghai Conference had no authority to draft a Convention concerning restrictions of the manufacture or sale of dangerous drugs. Nor had the representatives at this Conference the right to pledge their countries to any definite policy. The Shanghai Conference was confined to resolutions, but these were good and each member of the Conference promised to try to persuade his particular country to restrict the

cultivation, consumption and export of opium, its derivatives and of other narcotics. Despite its lack of power, the International Conference at Shanghai was extremely important in the history of opium, as drugs were finally acknowledged to be a world problem, and the Conference signified that the days of *laissez-faire*, as far as opium was concerned, might soon be over.

THE Shanghai Conference had initiated the international struggle against opium. It had been given publicity in the world Press. Its fifth Resolution for the first time publicly proclaimed the grave danger of drug addiction, and this Resolution was read by thousands of individuals who had never before regarded opium as a menace to public health.

In this Resolution, the Shanghai Conference had stated "that the International Opium Commission finds that the unrestricted manufacture, sale, and use of morphine cause a grave danger, and that the morphine habit shows signs of spreading; the International Opium Commission therefore desires to urge strongly on all Governments that it is highly important that drastic measures should be taken by each Government in its own territories and possessions to control the manufacture, sale and distribution of this drug, and also such other derivatives of opium as may appear on scientific inquiry to be liable to similar abuse and productive of like ill effects."

This Resolution began systematic enlightenment on the

subject of opium and drugs, but in all civilized countries the number of men and women, who realized that the Shanghai Conference had not gone far enough was increasing. Resolutions and suggestions and recommendations were not sufficient. It was obvious that, if a lasting reform was to be effected, delegates to future conferences must be given the power to commit their governments to a definite anti-drug policy.

In 1909 President Taft of the United States called together another meeting to discuss opium and dangerous drugs. This conference met at The Hague in January, 1909. The following countries were represented: China, British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Persia, Portugal, Russia, Siam and the United States.

The Hague meeting was more important than the Shanghai Conference had been, because the delegates at The Hague had at least been empowered by their countries to draw up a Convention. They were then to put this Convention before their home governments, and after it had been ratified, international legislation regarding opium and drugs was to be discussed.

Naturally it was not easy for the delegates at The Hague to agree. Some of the countries represented, the British Empire, for example, were still faced with an economic and financial as well as social problem in connection with opium and drugs. The Indian budget continued to loom up before British statesmen, while at the same time the danger of drug addiction at home was coming threateningly close. Other countries, who did not grow opium themselves, or only small amounts, and therefore derived no revenues from drugs, saw only the social issues involved.

The opium growing and exporting countries were afraid that their financial interests would be affected by the Hague Conference, and for this reason, The Hague Opium Convention, as the final resolutions of this meeting are called, was not nearly as far-reaching as the newly-awakened conscience of the world would have wished.

On paper the Convention appeared to be more hopeful than it was in practice. The following summary of the various Chapters will show that it seemed as though the spread of opium and drugs was indeed to be checked by the Convention.

Chapter One: The Convention was to control the production and distribution of raw opium, to prevent the export of raw opium to countries which prohibit the imports of opium, to mark packages for export containing more than five kilograms of raw opium, and to permit the export and import only by duly authorized persons.

Chapter Two: "By gradual steps" to suppress entirely the traffic in smoking opium; and to prohibit the export and import "as soon as possible."

Chapter Three: To restrict the manufacture, sale, and use of medicinal opium, morphine, cocaine, and their derivatives to strictly medicinal and legitimate purposes.

Chapter Four: In conjunction with China, to take measures to prevent the influx of raw opium, smoking opium, and manufactured drugs into China for purposes of addiction.

Chapter Five: To "examine the possibility" of enacting laws or regulations making it a penal offence to be in illegal possession of raw opium, prepared opium (smoking opium), morphine, cocaine, etc. ; to exchange information

as to the various preventive measures exacted within the frontiers of the various signatory countries, and to provide statistics concerning various aspects of the traffic in narcotics.

When one studies the Convention more closely, its inadequacy is apparent. The suggestion that the production and distribution of raw opium was to be "controlled" did not mean very much, as the Convention did not state to what extent the traffic in opium was to be controlled, nor how this control was to be realized in each country. The Convention merely specified in this connection that the "Contracting Powers shall enact laws or regulations for the control of the production of raw opium, unless laws or regulations on the subject are already in existence."

The clause—article 6 of Chapter Two—dealing with the suppression of the manufacture and trade of prepared opium is equally indefinite and open to any interpretation each contracting power wished to give it. By this article it was merely agreed that they were "to take measures for the gradual and effective suppression of the manufacture of, internal trade in, and use of, prepared opium, with due regard to the varying circumstances of each country concerned, unless regulations on the subject are already in existence." The American delegates at The Hague suggested that an international Commission be appointed to supervise the execution of the final Convention, but this suggestion was declined by the Chinese, the French and the British delegates.

The frequent occurrence of the phrase "gradual and effective" must have irritated enlightened individuals who were aware that something drastic should be done quickly.

International conferences of bankers and business men were able to make vital decisions much more rapidly than were these delegates to The Hague, and it was quite obvious that if national and colonial revenues and financial interests generally had not been involved in most of the countries represented at the Opium Convention of 1909, these gradual methods would not have been found acceptable, for public health already demanded a speedy abolition of drugs except for medicinal purposes.

Severe critics of The Hague Convention have, however, admitted that a certain progress was achieved by it. The fact that the whole problem of manufactured drugs, as well as the opium question was included in the discussions was in itself extremely important. Besides, The Hague Convention was a useful basis of later international agreements regarding narcotics, and it established principles which were essential to any future curtailment of drug production and distribution.

The signatory countries acknowledged the revolutionary principle that the production and the trade in opium and drugs was to be put under government control. This meant that an entire industry was to be supervised by the state. In the Convention, furthermore, the subject of limiting the manufacture and trade of opiates was at least approached, whereas before The Hague meeting countries with opium revenues had refused to discuss such a possibility.

Besides, though accurate scientific definitions may seem a trivial by-product of such a Convention, it was important that, at The Hague, opium and many of its derivatives, as well as cocaine, the principal alkaloid of the cocoa

leaf, were pinned down to chemical terms. For smugglers everywhere were already trying to evade existing regulations governing the traffic in drugs. They would claim, for instance, that some new derivatives of morphine found in their possession were not really morphine, and until morphine and its by-products were properly defined by an official body like the Hague Convention, these smugglers were able to circumvent the law.

The delegates at The Hague Convention knew that it would not be simple to persuade their respective governments to ratify the Convention. Already powerful vested interests, which were represented in the parliaments of various countries, were showing a bitter opposition to the Hague Convention and to any laws or regulations which would restrict the production or the lucrative trade in drugs.

The delegates at The Hague therefore voted to give themselves plenty of time to persuade their countries to ratify the Convention, and it was agreed that it was not to come into force until December 31st, 1914. By that date all the governments concerned were expected to have signed it. In the meanwhile two more conferences, one in 1913 and one in June, 1914, were to be arranged, and countries not yet represented were invited to send delegates. The Government of the Netherlands was appointed to act as an intermediary for any communications between the various governments concerned with The Hague Convention.

When the conference met in June, 1914, eleven countries had ratified The Hague Convention: Belgium, China, Denmark, Guatemala, Honduras, Italy, Portugal,

Siam, Sweden, United States of America and Venezuela. In November, 1914, The Hague Convention was ratified by Norway and Nicaragua, and Brazil signed in December. When war broke out in August, however, four of the nations most vitally concerned with the opium problem had not yet ratified it. Action on their part had to be postponed until after the War. These important countries were France, Japan, Persia and Russia.

Naturally anti-drug activities were completely stopped during the War, and the consumption of narcotics increased tremendously during this period. The consumption of medicinal preparations of opium accelerated the spread of addiction. The publicity given to the bad effect of drugs at the time of The Hague Conference was temporarily forgotten and the War stimulated the demand for narcotics. When hostilities ceased, it was finally obvious to statesmen that, unless all nations, and not only the signatories of The Hague Convention, intervened in the drug traffic, the health of whole sections of the European as well as Eastern populations would be exposed to the danger of opiates. The drafters of the Peace Treaties decided that the signatories to these treaties, both Germany and her allies, as well as the allied governments, should automatically become signatories to the Hague Opium Convention. Opium clauses were included in the treaties of peace. Article 295 of the Versailles Peace Treaty reads as follows:

“Those of the High Contracting Powers who have not yet signed, or who have signed, but not yet ratified, the Opium Convention signed at The Hague on January 23rd, 1912, agree to bring the said Convention into force, and

for this purpose to enact the necessary legislation without delay and in any case within a period of twelve months from the coming into force of the present Treaty.

“Furthermore, they agree that ratification of the present Treaty should, in the case of powers which have not yet ratified the Opium Convention, be deemed in all respects equivalent to the ratification of that Convention and to the signature of the Special Protocol which was opened at The Hague in accordance with the resolutions adopted at the Third Opium Conference in 1914 for bringing the said Convention into force.”

As one of the neutral countries not directly affected by the Peace Treaty, the Netherlands did not wish to continue as an intermediary between the powers, now greatly increased in number, which had pledged themselves to The Hague Convention. The Netherlands suggested to the Peace Conference that the League of Nations assume the responsibility of carrying out The Hague Convention.

Article 23 of the League Covenant provided that the members of the League of Nations should “entrust the League with the general supervision over agreements with regard to the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs.”

In 1920 the First Assembly of the League of Nations, in turn, delegated the opium problem to the League Council. The Council in 1921, appointed a permanent “Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs.” By November 1924, the representatives of fifty-seven nations had signed The Hague Convention, and the governments of forty-seven of these countries had ratified the Convention.

Again it seemed as though the problem of opium was on the verge of being solved. Actually this was not the case, and many of the members of the Advisory Committee may not have appreciated the vastness of the task before them. For opium, and all drugs, apparently move far more rapidly than any reforms to check their spread.

THE first task before the League's Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs was to try to make The Hague Convention an effective instrument. The Committee, on which the chief producing, distributing, manufacturing and consuming countries were represented, was to assist and advise the Council in dealing with any question that might arise in connection with the Hague Convention and "to secure the fullest possible co-operation between the various countries." To accomplish this end, systems of licences, and of import and export certificates, had to be devised, and an effort made to introduce them in actual practice. As, however, every country concerned held a different view regarding the "gradual and effective" curtailment of the trade, and, as the dependence of these nations' budgets on opium was by no means uniform, the Advisory Committee confronted a most difficult problem.

The Advisory Committee had also assumed the function

of collecting information concerning the trade in drugs in and between the various nations which had signed The Hague Convention. The Governments were asked to send to the Committee annual statistical statements concerning their production of and trade in dangerous drugs. Changes in legislation affecting the distribution of narcotics were reported to the Committee. The Governments also informed the Committee whenever discoveries of contraband trading activities were made in their territories. These disclosures, which reflect the vast dimensions of the contraband drug trade, have been important, for they have proven how right are those countries and individuals who would like to see a far more rigid control of the international drug traffic than has heretofore been introduced by the League.

The sifting and weighing of the information received by the Committee was not at first easy, for there was no background of knowledge to illuminate the data which came in from various countries. The Advisory Committee did not yet know what were the world requirements in dangerous drugs for medicinal purposes. When, in 1923, the Committee finally concluded that these legitimate requirements amounted to 350 tons, it was discouraging to compare this figure with actual production, which was ten times as great as the medicinal demand: 3,500 tons. This tremendous surplus bore out the reports received by the Committee that the illicit supply of drugs and the illicit traffic in them was increasing all over the world.

People who, financially speaking, had nothing to gain or lose from the illicit or the contraband trade in drugs hoped that the Advisory Committee would act very

thoroughly and at once. From a moral point of view, as well as from the point of view of public health, the Advisory Committee should, of course, have recommended to the League immediately to urge the member countries to limit not only the manufacture of dangerous drugs, but the production of the raw materials such as opium and coca-leaf as well. But economic considerations, the revenues of Great Powers, prevented such a revolutionary proposal from emerging at this time in Geneva. The health of nations has never been considered as important as national finances.

The United States was the first country to attempt serious and far-reaching limitation of narcotics production. As, however, the United States had not ratified the Treaty of Versailles, they were not officially represented on the Opium Advisory Committee of the League of Nations, but in 1923 Washington sent an unofficial delegation to Geneva to discuss the drug trade with the Advisory Committee. The Chairman of this delegation, which was to act in a "consultative capacity" was Stephen G. Porter, the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the United States House of Representatives. Mr. Porter felt very strongly on the subject of drugs.

He consistently declared that The Hague Convention had hardly begun to deal properly with the abuses of opium and drugs, even in theory. His delegation presented the following uncompromising resolutions to the Advisory Committee:

"(1) If the purpose of The Hague Opium Convention is to be achieved according to its spirit and true intent, it must be recognized that the use of opium products for

other than medicinal and scientific purposes is an abuse and not legitimate.

"(2) In order to prevent the abuse of these products it is necessary to exercise control of production of raw opium in such a manner that there will be no surplus available for non-medicinal purposes."

These resolutions were resented by many members of the Advisory Committee. They contended that the American proposals went far beyond Chapter II of The Hague Convention. This was the "gradual and effective" Chapter, which also circumvented the issue of the limitation of trade and production by stating mildly that "those Powers which are not yet ready to prohibit immediately the export of prepared opium shall prohibit it *as soon as possible.*"

Sir John Campbell, the representative of India on the Advisory Committee, responded to the American resolution by a proviso which was to make it impossible for the Advisory Committee to interfere with the eating of opium in India. He recorded that "the use of raw opium, according to the established practice in India, and its production for such use, are not illegitimate under the Convention."

As this declaration shows, the Indian Government and Great Britain have consistently held the opinion that the *eating* of opium is a "legitimate" use of the drug in India. English experts defend this practice on the grounds that when eaten (or dissolved in water and drunk) opium is not a "drug of addiction." It is claimed by many physicians, on the other hand, that opium pills are more harmful than

smoking opium. When smoked, they say, much of the morphine content remains in the ashes, and is not imbibed by the consumer, while when eaten, most of the morphine is taken into the system.

Sir John Campbell, however, upheld the former opinion. He urged the Committee to realize that eating opium was harmless to the population of India.

Against such opposition those members of the Advisory Committee who disapproved of opium eating could not support the American Resolutions. The Committee, therefore, vaguely put these Resolutions before the League "as embodying general principles by which the Governments should be guided. . . ."

The Committee also admitted that The Hague Convention of 1912 was based on the principles expressed in these American Resolutions, but pointed out to the League that France, Germany, Great Britain, Japan, the Netherlands, Portugal and Siam had recorded reservations against them.

When sufficient data had been compiled by the Advisory Committee, the League in 1923 decided to summon an Opium Conference. The Fourth Assembly passed resolutions calling for two international Conferences to be held in Geneva in 1924 and 1925 under the auspices of the League. The discussions of the first Conference were to be confined to the opium situation in the Far East, particularly China, and the second was to deal with the general limitation of the manufacture of opium.

Many sensible people thought it would have been more useful to have only one Conference which would have discussed all the questions concerning opium and narcotics.

Representatives of some of the most important countries—the United States, the Union of South Africa, France, Persia, and China herself—urged the one Conference plan. But the other members, led by Sir Malcolm Delevigne, the British delegate, insisted on the two.

Sir Malcolm Delevigne's attitude was summarized in the official minutes of the League. "It is true," he said, "that the decision as to the limitation of the amount of opium to the need for smoking would have a bearing on the work of the second (conference) in considering the limitation of the production of raw opium; but the conference on the Far Eastern question could be held first in order to enable the second conference, dealing with the limitation of the production of raw opium, to take into consideration the figures fixed by the Far Eastern Conference."

So two conferences were held, but an American critic of these conferences was justified in his remarks when he wrote that "the essential fact to be borne in mind was that, despite all the talk and the prevailing delusions about any possible co-operation or interchange between the two conferences, the result insured that the opium business in the Far East should be to the utmost possible extent isolated as the exclusive concern of the small group of Powers having possessions there and deriving revenue from it for the support of their colonial governments."

The League's Resolutions concerning these two Conferences were not very promising. As usual the wording was vague and non-committal. Obviously, the feelings of none of the countries involved were to be hurt. Perhaps the League and its Committees were never more effective

than they were because of this undue consideration for powerful nations.

"The Assembly approves the proposal of the Advisory Committee," the first Resolution read, "that the Governments concerned should be invited immediately to enter into negotiations with a view to the conclusion of an agreement as to the measures for giving effective application in the Far Eastern territories to Part II of (The Hague) Convention and to the reduction of the amount of raw opium to be imported for the purpose of smoking in those territories where it is temporarily continued, and as to the measures which should be taken by the Government of the Republic of China to bring about the suppression of the illegal production and use of opium in China, and requests the Council to invite these Governments to send representatives with plenipotentiary powers to a Conference for the purpose and to report to the Council at the earliest possible date."

The Resolution providing for the Second Conference read as follows:

"The Assembly, having noted with satisfaction that, in accordance with the hope expressed in the fourth resolution, adopted by the Assembly in 1922, the Advisory Committee has reported that the information now available makes it possible for the Governments concerned to examine, with the view to the conclusion of an agreement, the question of the limitation of the amounts of morphine, heroin, or cocaine and their respective salts, to be manufactured; of the limitation of the amounts of raw opium and the cocoa leaf to be imported for that purpose and for other medicinal and scientific purposes ;

and of the limitation of the production of raw opium and the cocoa leaf for export to the amount required for such medicinal and scientific purposes, requests the Council, as a means of giving effect to the principles submitted by the representatives of the United States of America and to the policy which the League, on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, had adopted, to invite the Governments concerned to send representatives with plenipotentiary powers to a Conference for this purpose, to be held, if possible, immediately after the Conference mentioned in Resolution V."

. . . . .

The First Opium Conference was opened in Geneva on November 3rd, 1924. It was very much smaller than the Second. Only seven nations, those with possessions or territories where smoking was "temporarily" permitted, and China, as the eighth, were represented. These seven countries were Great Britain for the Malay States, Sarawak, Hong Kong, etc.; France for Indo-China; Holland for the Dutch East Indies and Java; Portugal for Macao; Japan for Formosa; India for Burma; the Kingdom of Siam.

All of the delegates to the First Conference were men with great knowledge of the opium problem and the Far East. As opium smoking had already been prohibited in the Philippines, the United States was not represented at this Conference. The absence of Mr. Porter, a man with such a definite and articulate attitude, was not perhaps regretted by the more conservative members of this First Conference.

The Advisory Committee had made several recommendations to the first Conference. The Committee had suggested the abolishment of the farm system, that is to say the system prevalent in the East whereby private firms were given concessions to import and distribute opium. Government monopolies were to replace this farm system: Government shops were to take the place of private shops, "so as to remove the incentive to increase sales." This last suggestion puzzled many laymen, because governments had been known to make considerable profits out of the opium trade.

The second recommendation of the Committee urged the limitation of opium imports to a maximum quality, which was to be fixed. The third advised the investigation of the possibility of introducing a system of registration and rationing of opium addicts. The fourth asked the Conference to consider a system of uniform retail prices and uniform penalties for infraction of laws.

From the start there seems to have been considerable friction at this Far Eastern Conference. The tension became critical when the registration of addicts was brought forward by the Japanese delegate. In Formosa Japan had successfully introduced a plan of listing and rationing all addicts and of deporting all new addicts.

The representatives of Great Britain supported Japan's advocacy of registration. The majority of the other nations represented, however, opposed this plan because, so they asserted, smuggling had increased tremendously in China and, for this reason, registration would be quite ineffectual. China was accused of exporting illicit opium to other Eastern countries (just as, a century before, she

had been flooded by smuggled opium from India). The majority of the delegates to the Conference, in fact, refused to vote for registration until China effectively controlled and suppressed her smuggling trade.

The Chinese delegate objected to this accusation of smuggling and demanded statistics and proof from his fellow-members of the Conference. There were no definite figures, and the discussions at this point must have been very heated. The Chinese representative then protested against the refusal of the majority of the Conference to suppress opium smoking in their territories until China had successfully dealt with the illicit traffic in her own country. One can hardly blame the Chinese delegate for feeling somewhat bitter about the whole situation.

Another problem was very much on the minds of the Chinese at this time. It was the old question of extraterritoriality which had formerly made the missionaries so unpopular. The old custom of granting foreign nationality to men involved in the illicit traffic had continued, and in January, 1925, while the First Opium Conference was in session, a striking example of this malpractice became known. A case of smuggling activities on a large scale, in which citizens of various countries were implicated, was discovered in China. One of these smugglers was then a Spaniard. Until 1911, however, when the Sino-British Agreement put a stop to the profitable importation of Indian opium, this man had somehow or other secured for himself a British passport.

The Shanghai correspondent of *The Times* sent the following message regarding this scandal: "Apart from

the implication of Chinese officials, the case throws a glaring light on the scandalous sale to Chinese and others of patents of nationality of the smaller nations. This is a very old grievance, which does much to justify the Chinese complaint that extra-territoriality directly contributes to disorder in China. It is high time the Great Powers urged to effect the suppression of the abuse."

The Great Powers did nothing to prevent this abuse, though through their representatives at the Opium Conference they had every opportunity to do so. In fact neither the first nor the second Opium Conference did anything to help China to solve her opium problem. This meant that the First Conference had evaded the major issue.

The Convention of the First Opium Conference was finally signed on February 11th, 1925. The farm system was abolished in the Far East, and the opium trade was placed under the control of the various Governments who pledged themselves to introduce licences and certificates. There was also a provision stipulating that prepared opium, too, was eventually to become a government monopoly, but this clause was reduced to mere theory by the weakening phrase that this would be done "as soon as circumstances permit."

Article VI of this Convention was important. This article prohibits the re-export of opium from any possession or territory which imports opium for smoking purposes. Trans-shipment of prepared opium through such territories is also forbidden by Article VI. It was hoped that the trans-shipments of morphine and other derivatives would be forbidden in a similar manner by the Second Conference, but this was not achieved.

Licit traders or smugglers, therefore, despite Article VI, could re-export as many opiates as they chose as long as the opium had been reduced to its derivatives.

Apart from Article VI, Article I (abolishing the farming system) and Articles II and III, prohibiting the sale of opium to minors and forbidding minors from entering smoking divans, this whole Convention had an atmosphere of good intentions rather than of effectiveness. Such phrases as "the contracting powers shall limit *as much as possible* the number of retail shops" did not mean very much, and the cautious and flowery phrases of Article IX made many people think that the Conference had been quite useless.

"The contracting powers," says Article IX, "will examine in the most favourable spirit the possibility of taking legislative measures to render punishable illegitimate transactions which are carried out in another country by persons residing within their territories."

This lack of determination to curtail the illicit traffic in the Far East did not promise well for the Second, more important Conference, which was to deal with the limitation of the manufacture of narcotic drugs all over the world. This Conference sat from November, 1924, to February, 1925.

The Second Conference, which was attended by delegates from thirty-six nations, met in November, 1924, two weeks after the First Conference had begun. The members of the First were also members of the Second. The two Conferences were, if such a contradictory term may be used, united from the beginning by their mutual disagreements and quarrels.

The Advisory Committee had realized that these deliberations would not be easy, and in the summer of 1924, before the Second Conference began, a Preparatory Committee of six members had been appointed to discuss the agenda. It was hoped that this Preparatory Committee would smooth the way for the Conference, but these six men could not agree; they failed to draft any proposals.

The membership of the Second Conference was very mixed. Many of the members had goodwill, but little expert knowledge. Many of those who were experts, on the other hand, were extremely knowledgeable, but not eager, for one reason or another, to limit the manufacture of drugs. Naturally these experts were in a position to dominate the Conference with an imposing array of facts and figures.

There were also delegates at this conference who were not concerned with opium at all. They represented their countries merely because they happened to be stationed in Switzerland as their Governments' diplomatic emissaries. It was not easy for these diplomats, many of whom realized intuitively the dangers of opium and drugs, and yet knew practically nothing about the subject, to deal with their more experienced colleagues, who had studied every phase of the opium problem for years.

From the start the American delegation was extremely firm, and, it should be added, extremely unpopular. They were the most formidable single group of anti-opium representatives at the Conference. The American members included Bishop Brent, opposed to the drug traffic on moral grounds, Dr. Rupert Blue, a former Surgeon in the United States Army, who condemned

drug addiction on medical grounds; Mr. Edwin Neville, an American Consul, who had seen at first hand what opium had done to China, and Mrs. Hamilton Wright, the widow of the great pioneer in the anti-opium campaign in the United States. This American delegation loomed up during the entire Second Conference. Many more conciliatory representatives accused the Americans of trying to wreck the Conference.

When this Second Conference opened, the delegates could not even agree on the scope of the deliberations permitted at the meeting. The Americans, for instance, were eager to discuss the "limitations of raw opium and cocoa leaf production to medicinal needs." This sentence went to the very root of the opium problem and meant action.

The Advisory Committee, on the other hand, and the majority of the delegates, had no wish to talk about the limitation of drug production to medicinal minimums, for such a debate would have made it clear that too much raw opium was being produced in the world. The Advisory Committee felt that to approach this delicate subject would have meant that the Conference was moving too fast. For this reason, the Committee interpreted the invitation of the Assembly as limiting the discussion of the Second Conference to safe subjects which were merely preparatory to the limitation of opium production and drug manufacture. The Resolution providing for the Second Conference had made it possible for the Conference to avoid essential issues. The Conference was merely instructed "to examine the question" of limiting the production of narcotics.

In view of this evasive attitude, the work of the Second Conference was rather a farce. The disagreements among the delegates were so profound that sub-committees were appointed to deal with points which should have been discussed by the Conference as a whole. When delegates to any Conference reach that phase of dis-harmony and diffusion when they appoint "A sub-sub-com-mittee of Committee B," anyone must realize that the meet-ing has not been a success.

"The consuming countries," as the late S. H. Bailey, one of the outstanding opium experts, wrote, "felt powerless to destroy the demand for prepared opium so long as producing countries did not agree to limit pro-duction in such a way that no quantities would be available for smuggling. Producing countries in turn were not willing to accept the American proposals to restrict production of raw opium to the world's medical and scientific needs with the temporary exception of the quantities of prepared opium required for opium smoking. Their representatives argued that it would be difficult to justify to their nationals a policy which would deprive many of them of the means of livelihood so long as ad-ministrative authority in other territories where the cultivation of the poppy was illegal, in particular China, was so ineffective that supplies were continually being smuggled into opium-smoking territories."

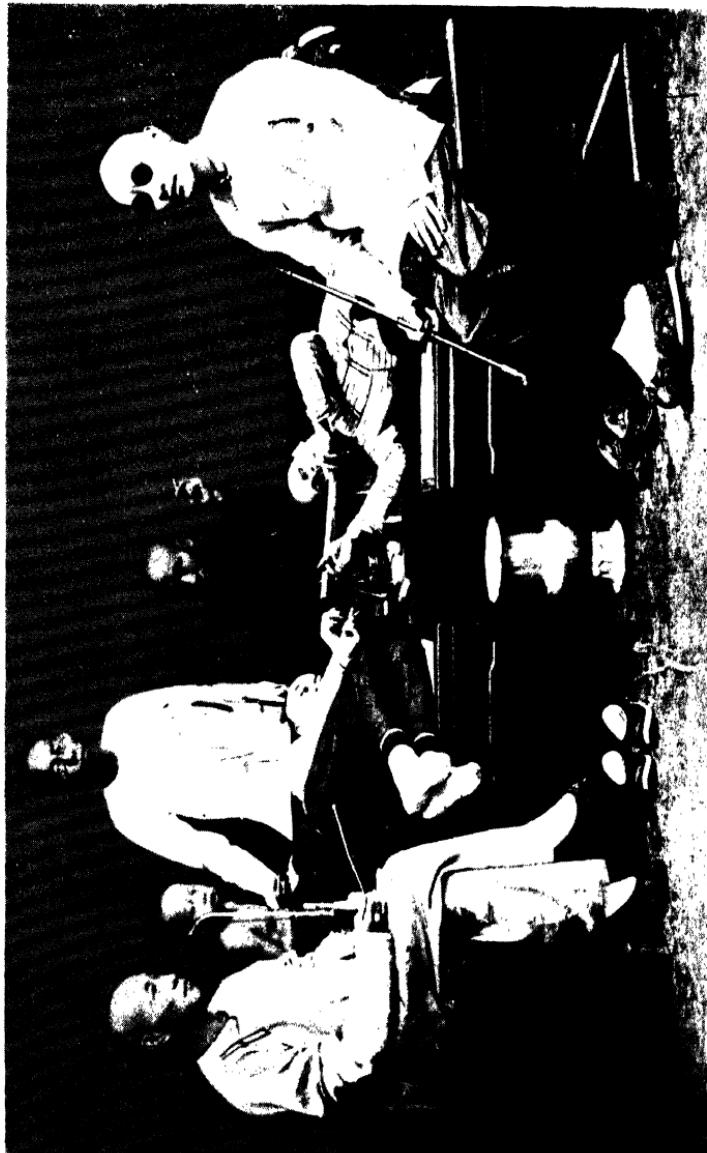
Many arguments were brought up against limiting the production of opium. India, so her representative declared, would have been willing to limit raw opium production for export, but refused to consider limitation for domestic consumption. Persia declared that limitation

was impossible, because it would be too difficult to substitute other crops for the poppy. Turkey was worried about her peasants; what would happen to those of them dependent on poppy cultivation if production were limited to medicinal use? Jugo-Slavia said that economic conditions in her country did not warrant a curtailment of her poppy cultivation. Greece, one of the smallest producing countries, told the Conference that she would be willing to accept the American proposals for limitation, if the other producing countries did the same.

Obviously, most of the nations cultivating the poppy were unwilling seriously to consider limitation. China was the only country willing, without reservation, to follow the Americans' lead. Dr. Sao-Ke Alfred Sze, the Chinese Minister to Washington, and China's delegate at the Conference, declared that as soon as internal political conditions in China made it possible, his country would agree to introducing a limitation of poppy cultivation to medicinal requirements.

When it became quite clear to the American delegation that, as Mr. Porter wrote in his memorandum to M. Herluf Zahle, the Danish delegate, and the President of the Conference, limitation, "the purpose for which the Conference was called" would not be accomplished, the American delegation withdrew. This was on February 6th, 1925. The Chinese representatives left the Conference the next day.

The other members of the Conference were extremely annoyed. The majority of the delegates considered the Americans most unreasonable, and they were severely censured by M. Loudon, the leader of the Dutch delegation.



*Opium smokers*



In a public speech M. Loudon made a few rather two-edged remarks about the Americans' "driving power" and "American idealism" and then went on to say:

"I think it is desirable to point out, in view of further meetings of the same sort which may be held at Geneva, that an international conference presupposes the possibility of reciprocal concessions and of true and real exchanges of opinion, and of good will on both sides, and such a conference is doomed to failure if any one of the parties has imperative instructions to impose its will upon the others under pain of leaving the conference. . . . If these discussions have been rendered more difficult and even superfluous, the reason is that Mr. Porter never took the pains to explain his own point of view or even to reply to the arguments of his opponents."

This statement shows that the Conference was indeed doomed to failure. Not, however, because of Mr. Porter, but because the limitation of opium itself, and of cocoa leaf and other raw materials, is the only effective cure for the increase of drug production. The Conference was unwilling to accept this fact which was unpleasant to many members. As long as there is production of opium and its derivatives over and beyond the medicinal requirements, smuggling and illicit traffic must continue, and the Conference did not even prohibit the re-export of drugs as long as they had been legally imported into any country.

The Conference as a whole was satisfied with discussing distribution of the finished products, that is to say, manufactured drugs, though most of the delegates must have been aware that any measures controlling narcotics

were more or less meaningless as long as opium itself was being freely produced, for the surplus raw material would inevitably find its way to the illicit drug market.

Objective observers realized that for this reason the Geneva Convention of 1925, as the resolutions of the Second Conference are called, was in fact merely a palliative. But the measures adopted in this Convention were generally accepted as a definite step forward.

The most important contribution of this Convention was the commitment of the signatory countries to the system of import certificates. It also pledges the nations concerned to pass "effective laws or regulations to limit exclusively to medicinal and scientific purposes the manufacture, import, sale, distribution, export and use" of narcotic drugs, and stipulates that the signatory countries "shall control all persons manufacturing, importing, selling, distributing or exporting" these drugs.

The Convention also created a Permanent Central Board to be appointed by the League of Nations. The establishment of this Central Board, which was to consist of eight members, "who, by their technical competence, impartiality and competence, will command general confidence," was considered by many people to be the outstanding achievement of the Second Conference.

The Permanent Central Board was regularly to compile statistics concerning production, medical requirements and necessary imports in each country, and make an annual report to the League of the world drug situation. The Advisory Committee had collected information, but the Board was given the right to demand an explanation from any government which, according to the figures

compiled, was producing conspicuous quantities of drugs. The Board was also empowered to bring the matter before the League Council. This meant that the signatories of the Convention would be able to keep a check on each other.

Optimists felt that the establishment of the Permanent Central Board had made the Second Conference worth while. Many of the delegates left Geneva with a feeling of satisfaction when the Convention was signed on February 19th, 1925. It took over three years for this Convention to become effective. The Convention of 1925 was ratified by a sufficient number of states and came into force on September 28th, 1928.

It is undoubtedly true, as supporters of the League of Nations contend, that the smuggling of drugs and the spread of addiction during the last fifteen years would have increased more alarmingly than they have if the Opium Convention of 1925 had not come into force. But it would be a mistake to believe that this Convention performed a miracle. In fact, it did not. Only the surface of the problem had been scratched, and as Colonel Arthur Woods, who was Police Commissioner for New York City and who, in 1926, was appointed as Assessor to the Opium Advisory Committee expressed it, "in the struggle between traffickers and the police, the advantages still lie with the traffickers."

Mr. Woods, who studied the activities of smugglers at first hand for years came to the conclusion, borne out by the findings of many experts, that "for every ounce of these drugs that serves a proper purpose, there are at least ten ounces that finally reach an enslaved addict."

The reports which reached the Central Opium Board in Geneva were equally pessimistic.

"In the years 1925-30," a League of Nations document of 1938 reports, "the illicit traffic had developed to an even greater extent than was supposed at the time. At least ninety tons of morphine in excess of legitimate requirements had been manufactured and escaped into the illicit traffic during that period."

There were many reasons why the drug smugglers were able to function efficiently despite the regulations under the Convention of 1925. In the first place, of course, as the world production of opium and other raw materials had not been curtailed, these traffickers could buy up raw materials and establish secret laboratories for the manufacture of drugs destined for the contraband trade.

The smugglers were not, however, confined entirely to this illicit manufacture. Commercial subterfuges made it possible for them to buy and sell narcotics which had been legitimately produced, for often drugs destined for the smuggling traffic were shipped quite legally, that is to say, the original wholesale purchase of the drug, was technically unimpeachable.

The Lubrinole affair, which was discovered in August, 1926, and was reported by the League (in League Document O.C. 530) is typical of this method. The customs authorities in Southampton became suspicious of a shipment of six cases consigned from Havre to China by way of Canada. The shipper, a firm called Mechelaere and Company, in their declaration, stated that the cases contained "Lubrinole Chemical Product, not dangerous and without alcohol."

The British Customs authorities made an investigation and found that "Lubrinole" was not a medical product officially listed in France. Nor was it included in British lists. Then the Southampton authorities inquired in Mukden and Darien and learned that the firm given as the consignee of the cases did not exist, nor had the Chinese or Japanese authorities given a permit for the import of these cases.

The Customs authorities thereupon opened them and found that they contained a mixture of morphine and some "soft unctuous substance."

Mechelaere and Company admitted having "regularly sent this class of merchandise out of France," but this firm was not prosecuted, as the French law did not make an exportation permit necessary.

When this case was discussed by the Advisory Committee in Geneva, at the twelfth session, the French representative regretfully admitted that legally this firm was within its rights. For, as he said "although the bill of lading proved an intention to conceal, the authorities had been forced to recognize that the transaction was not contrary to the French law actually in force. There was no doubt that the goods were intended for the illicit traffic, and he regretted that, on account of the existing legislation, it had not been possible to inflict punishment."

In reply the British representative pointed out that the shipment had been stopped by the British authorities in Southampton because to allow it to pass "would not have been consistent with the obligations undertaken by the British Government in regard to the international traffic in opium."

The French representative, on the other hand, persisted in his point of view that, legally, this shipment was quite legal "because the registers of the firm showing all outgoings of morphine and the declarations to the Customs had been found in good order."

This Lubrinole case reflected the essential hopelessness of the situation despite the Convention of 1925. For it was not even known to the Advisory Committee where the morphine used in the "Lubrinole" was originally produced; Mechelaere and Company being obviously merely wholesalers or commission agents. Nor was it possible to stop the activities of this firm. At the end of August, 1926 (according to League Document O.C. 530 b.c.), Mechelaere shipped a new "dyeing stuff" labelled "colorant" which was composed of narcotics. This shipment, like the Lubrinole, was fortunately discovered, but again the French authorities could do nothing to prevent this firm from attempting to supply the illicit trade. They declared that "the export was perfectly regular as the firm of Mechelaere held an authorization from the Prefecture of Police for the sale of narcotics, and a *certificat d'exportation*, dated November 25th, 1936, No. 6272, had been issued in respect of the consignment by the Customs at the port of La Pallice."

Another striking instance of how dangerous drugs were legitimately launched into the illicit trade came to the attention of the Advisory Committee in 1927.

Three-quarters of a ton (750 kilograms) of Swiss morphine were found to be in the possession of a group of illicit traders, some of whom had "long been known to the Opium Committee as traffickers." The Committee's

report states that this shipment of morphine "was to have been bought originally from Hoffman La Roche and Company at Basle. The person giving the order, however, was referred to the French firm of the same name because at that time no export licence was required in France." As such a licence was, however, required by Swiss law, the Swiss firm simply relegated the morphine shipment to its branch in France.

In this case, too, the merchants supplying the smugglers were not punished, for the Swiss firm had transferred the shipment quite legally to its French branch, from which the smugglers were able to obtain it without infringing the French law.

Commercial subterfuges were not the only way open to traffickers who wanted to evade the laws and regulations which were very gradually being formulated in various countries under the Convention of 1925. The Convention was not far-reaching enough to keep pace with the discoveries of science. New derivatives of morphine, such as eucodol and dicohide, which were not listed and therefore not properly caught in the obviously inadequate net of control established by the Convention, and were not listed with other dangerous narcotics proved excellent drugs of addiction.

As was to be expected, the manufacturers of drugs in many countries refused to admit that these new narcotics came under the certificate system of the Convention of 1925.

In 1929, for instance, at a session of the Opium Advisory Committee, the German representative declared that the "German Government could not undertake to apply the

import certificate system against German exporters in respect of these two substances (eucodol and dicochine)." The German representative explained to the Advisory Committee that the laws then in force in his own country gave the authorities no right to apply the certificate system to exports of these two dangerous drugs of addiction.

Apart from new drugs, there was also the problem of the esters, with which traffickers were able to supply the contraband trade. In 1927, for example, the Advisory Committee learned (O.C. 294 c, page 111) that considerable quantities of a most dangerous ester was being dispatched by post. This ester was acetylpropionyl-morphine. It was found that these posted consignments had been sent by a firm in Switzerland, but this firm could not be punished as the substance shipped did not come under the drugs listed by the Convention.

The esters were discussed at the eleventh session of the Advisory Committee in 1928. One would have expected every member present to protest against this abuse, but many did not. The representative of France, for example, protested against the suggestion that esters (a combination of morphine and acid) should be included in the list of drugs coming under the export and import certificate system. He contended that it "might be dangerous to place upon the list substances which, while scientifically capable of causing intoxication, were not in practice employed by addicts. Such action," he declared, "would draw attention to these substances" and "the curiosity of addicts would be stimulated by a list of new narcotics."

The British representative objected to the point of

view of his French colleague. He said that "the main factor in the situation was not the ignorance of the public, but the knowledge of manufacturers."

"Unless action was taken in this matter," he continued, "any manufacturer who was not prepared to carry out his business honestly would know quite well how to circumvent the provisions of The Hague or Geneva Conventions."

Statements such as these implied very clearly that the Convention of 1925 had not been a success. Whether or not esters were included under the certificate system, whether new drugs were added to the list or were ignored until they had made inroads into the illicit traffic, did not radically alter the position, for it had become quite obvious that a new opium agreement, and one that was really international, must be formulated before conditions could improve.

More and more experts were beginning to admit that the Convention of 1925 had been altogether too vague. The signatory countries had pledged themselves to enact legislation which would limit the manufacture and the distribution of drugs to "medicinal and scientific purposes," but it had been left to each country to decide what were its medicinal and scientific requirements, what sort of laws they would enact, and when they would enact them. Only an international agreement stipulating the requirements of each country and stating the specific allocation of amounts to be manufactured in each would, it was now generally agreed, effectually limit the world production of narcotics.

A number of experts and representatives of those

Governments in favour of a definite limitation urged the Advisory Committee to reconsider the entire opium and drug situation. Pressure was also brought to bear in various countries on the large manufacturing concerns, many of which had continuously opposed limiting their output, and thus their profits.

At the Tenth Assembly of the League of Nations, in 1929, a Resolution was finally passed asking the Advisory Committee "to prepare plans for such limitation (of drug manufacture), regard being had to world requirements for medical and scientific purposes."

The task confronting the Advisory Committee in connection with this Resolution was extremely complicated, for seven of the twelve nations represented on it were drug manufacturing countries and the drug manufacturers represented a powerful political influence. These countries were: France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

To pacify their drug industries these representatives on the Advisory Committee, who, of course, were a majority, tried to find a compromise. They drafted a scheme which would have established limitation, but would also, to a certain extent, have compensated the drug manufacturers for the financial losses they would have suffered as a result of this plan.

According to this scheme, the existing narcotics industries were to be given what would virtually have been a monopoly of production, that is to say, it was to be made extremely difficult for new firms to enter the market. Fresh competition was to be excluded from national and international narcotics markets.

A European cartel of drug manufacturers had already been organized some time before. Many disinterested individuals who disapproved of this cartel were convinced that the new scheme now suggested by the Advisory Committee might eventually lead to all sorts of mal-practices, quite unacceptable in an industry producing medicines essential to human health. The opponents of this monopoly scheme contended that a world monopoly held by a few powerful firms might lead to unreasonable price increases for important medicinal requirements, and in the end the consuming countries represented on the Advisory Committee, backed by public opinion, prevented the realization of this dangerous monopoly plan.

In the Advisory Committee's preparatory work for the Conference for the Limitation of the Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs, as it was to be called, there was also a great deal of highly technical talk about quotas to be allowed each country after manufacture had finally been limited. In plain English this technicality meant that, quite naturally, each country wanted the right to produce as large a quantity of drugs as possible. In October and November, 1930, in London, there was a preliminary Conference to discuss this important question of quotas.

When the new Convention was later completed, the quota system was summed up by the League in the following words:

"The world manufacture of drugs is limited each year to a specific quantity on the basis of estimates supplied by all countries of their legitimate needs for the year. The fraction of this total quantity to be manufactured by

each manufacturing country is fixed in advance by agreements concluded between them according to a quota system. Arrangements are made to provide each country with direct supplies up to the amounts indicated in its estimates."

The Conference finally met on May 27th, 1931, and it closed, after the new Convention was signed, on July 13th. There is no question that this Convention meant real progress. "It limited," as a League of Nations Document states, "world production (of narcotics) to legitimate needs by means of an international administration which exercised complete control over an entire industry and an entire trade, extending as far as an embargo."

This was the essential contribution of this Convention of 1931, which came into force in April, 1933; but actually it accomplished a great deal more. Drugs were classified on a more efficient basis so that new derivatives could not slip through the control, greater efforts were made to suppress the illicit traffic and there was to be far stricter supervision of the legitimate manufacture of drugs. No country could any longer manufacture, import, export or convert narcotics without making a return to the League of Nations. The annual world requirements were to be fixed on the basis of these returns.

To supervise the movement of narcotic drugs throughout the world, the Convention established a so-called Supervisory Body, the powers of which are more far-reaching than those of the Permanent Board. The Board and the Supervisory Body were to work closely together, thus providing a double check on limitation: the Supervisory

Body, from statistics compiled, establishes the amount of drugs to be manufactured each year, and the Board then sees that this amount is not exceeded.

As was to be expected, it was extraordinarily difficult for the Board to ascertain what were the bona fide medicinal requirements of each country, and thus to fix world requirements. During the first year after the organization of the Board, the returns made by various countries concerning their needs were so divergent, and in many cases so large in relation to the population, that the task seemed almost hopeless.

It took the Board many months to choose a method of compiling these requirement statistics. Finally it was decided to reduce the quantities of opiates consumed in each country to the number of medicinal doses contained in them. The total number of doses was then combined with the number of physicians, hospitals and dispensaries per unit of population in each country.

Not until this method was fully developed was it possible effectively to establish national and world requirements. The facing table shows the world requirements, as estimated by the Board for 1937:

No one appreciated the outstanding achievements of the 1931 Convention more profoundly than did the League itself. The league's praise of this work is typical of how political bodies are allowed to eulogize themselves while such self-satisfaction is considered bad taste when shown by individual statesmen or reformers.

In the League Assembly the Convention of 1931 was called, "a bold conception without precedent in the history of international relations and international law."

And in the introduction to the *Historical and Technical Study* of the Convention, prepared in 1937 by the Opium Traffic Section of the League Secretariat, the anonymous

Total Estimated World Requirements of Each Drug in the Year 1937 for Medical and Scientific purposes.

DRUGS (in anhydrous alkaloid)	1	2	3	4	5
		Amount required for use as such (con- sumption)	Amount required for con- version	Additions or de- ductions required to bring stocks to desired level	Grand Total (cols. 2, 3, 4)
1. Morphine . .	Kg.	Kg.	Kg.	Kg.	Kg.
2. Diacetylmorphine . .	10,619	30,011	346	40,976	
3. Cocaine . . .	992	1	28	965	
4. Dihydrohydroxycodeinone (Eucodal) . .	4,724	..	252	4,976	
5. Dihydrocodeinone (Dicodide) . .	229	..	9	238	
6. Dihydromorphinone (Dilaudide) . .	217	..	27	190	
7. Acetyldihydrocodeinone (Acedicone) . .	117	..	14	131	
8. Morphine-N-oxide (Genomorphine) . .	68	..	9	77	
9. Thebaine . . .	6	..	negl.	6	
10. Methylmorphine (Codeine) . .	20	623	1	644	
11. Ethylmorphine (Dionine) . .	24,196	600	928	25,724	
	2,951	..	248	3,199	

Note.—In the totals, grammes are omitted, and the figures approximated to the nearest kilogram.

author says: "This appears to be the first case in the history of international law in which a general Convention began to function in certain respects in relation to all States and territories in the world from the moment when it

was brought into operation by virtue of the ratification deposited by a limited number of States."

There is no doubt, that as this introduction says, opium reform had made great progress, that "within half a human lifetime it had advanced from the primitive steps of The Hague Convention of 1912, concluded between a mere handful of states, to the complex machinery of the Limitation Convention operating in every corner of the inhabited world."

This optimism, which was certainly justified in part, made many people forget that though the Convention meant progress, it had not yet gone to the root of the matter. The root of the matter was still opium in its raw or prepared state, as well as the other raw materials, and until the production of these natural products was limited, the illicit traffic could not possibly be stopped or appreciably checked.

UNDoubtedly the Opium Convention of 1931 was an important landmark in the history of opium. International control was stiffened, but for decades, as has been said, enlightened individuals had realized that fundamentally the drug situation cannot be improved until a sincere international effort is made to curtail the production of opium and the other raw materials concerned in the manufacture of narcotics.

As long as the poppy grows in abundance, the habits of opium smoking and eating which are, whatever Indian Government officials may say, forms of addiction, will continue freely in the East as they have for centuries as though the various Geneva Conventions had never been drafted. And until the world production of these raw materials has been limited to the supply needed for legitimate medical needs, traffickers will always have an abundant source from which to manufacture narcotics intended for addicts. One can look through the annual

reports of the Advisory Committee at random and find statements like the following (from C.271 M 140, 1938):

*"Indo-China.* Smuggling persists and will continue to do so so long as the cultivation of the poppy in adjacent territories provides the necessary supplies.

"Illicit traffic in Cochin-China is almost exclusively in prepared opium arriving from the north in small quantities either in vessels from China or Tonkin, by railway or by road. In 1936, 5 kg. of raw opium and 35 kg. of prepared opium were seized.

"Raw opium from Yunnan, China or Burma reaches North Annam through the forests and navigable waterways. Opium is mostly transformed into prepared opium by persons installed in villages which are difficult of access. Thence the opium is transported to the centres of consumption."

The development of poppy cultivation has not been uniform in the various producing countries since the Limitation of Drugs Convention decreased the licit demand for raw opium for manufacture. In China, for instance, there has been a marked drop: 1,611,968 kg. of raw opium were produced in 1936 as compared with 6,377,959 in 1934. In India, too, production fell from 711,688 kg. in 1933 to 337,011 kg. in 1935. (Last year for which figures have been published.) In Iran and Turkey, on the other hand, production is rising. In the former country, from 459,243 kg. in 1934 to 1,346,712

kg. in 1936; in the latter from 148,000 kg. in 1934 to 426,000 kg. in 1936. These are official figures published by the League of Nations (C 241 M 140, 1938) concerning official cultivation. There is, of course, no method of judging the unofficial illicit production of raw opium which is being carried on in the East.

The chief reason why the problem of limiting the production of raw opium was not tackled earlier by the League's Advisory Committee is that a very close connection exists between the limitation of the production of raw opium and the use of prepared opium for smoking or eating, and many producing countries continue to derive considerable revenues from smoking opium.

In The Hague Convention (Article 6) the policy of a "gradual and effective suppression of opium smoking" had already been adopted by the signatory Powers, but nothing had been done about it. The policy had remained a theoretical principle, like so many good intentions connected with opium. The League and the Advisory Committee's inactivity with regard to this Article 6 showed clearly that no convention which does not fix definite time limits can be really effective.

In the late twenties the League began to be worried about opium smoking. A Commission of Enquiry into Opium Smoking in the Far East was sent out to investigate, and in 1931 a Conference on smoking was held in Bangkok. But the Bangkok Agreement did nothing either to reduce the cultivation of the poppy or to curtail smoking. This agreement merely placed the sale of smoking opium under Government control, and offered a few palliatives. The chief points of this Bangkok Agreement were as follows:

(1) The retail sale and distribution of smoking opium is to be confined to shops which are owned by the Government in question. The shops are to be supervised by the Government and managed by individuals appointed by the Government. This need not apply in countries or territories where the system of rationing exists.

(2) Minors are not allowed to enter smoking divans. Anyone aiding or abetting a minor is to be punished.

(3) Opium is to be sold for cash only.

(4) One Government monopoly may be supplied by another, situated in a different territory, only if this other territory belongs to the same Power.

Obviously, this Agreement did not in any way realize Article 6 of The Hague Convention. It should be mentioned that the Advisory Committee had no share in drafting the Bangkok Agreement of 1931, but the information concerning the effects of smoking on the populations of the East published by the Commission of Enquiry forced the Committee to admit that preparatory work concerning a possible limitation of raw opium production could no longer be postponed.

As reports and recommendations concerning this limitation had been discussed for years—not to mention Article 6—certain passages in the League of Nations Report on the subject, published in 1938, seem exceedingly naive.

"It has come to be realized," this Report states, "that only by striking at the root—that is, by limiting the cultivation of the poppy for the production of opium—can clandestine manufacture be stopped and the illicit traffic effectively and finally countered."



1. Soles of shoes in which drugs were concealed  
2. Hiding place in the floor of Japanese drug factory in Hankow



This declaration means that after fifteen years of close study of the opium situation, the Advisory Committee has finally resolved to go to the "root of the matter." The Committee has declared at last that no convention can do any lasting or fundamental good whatsoever until the raw materials have been brought under some form of control.

To organize this control, the Committee is now preparing for a conference to "consider the possibility of limiting and controlling the cultivation of the opium poppy and the production of raw opium and controlling other raw materials for the manufacture of opium alkaloids."

"As in the case of manufactured drugs," the Advisory Committee states in this report of its preparatory work, "so also in the case of raw opium from which such drugs are made, it has been established beyond any possibility of doubt, that if they are produced in quantities greatly in excess of the world requirements, there is the gravest danger that the excess production will in great measure be diverted to illicit uses."

One wonders why this last sentence was put in the future tense. It is not a grave danger but a distressing actuality that excess production is constantly flowing into the illicit traffic, and the Advisory Committee has honestly admitted this fact. The sincerity of a majority of the Committee members in their wish now radically to improve the international drug situation is reflected in another passage of this Report which reads like a confession of failure when it is compared with earlier eulogies of the 1931 Convention.

"It has not," this passage in the 1938 Report reads, "been possible to prevent the clandestine manufacture

of dangerous drugs. The failure is due to the loose or ineffective application of the International Opium Conventions in some countries; and to the fact that, in such countries, the illicit manufacture of dangerous drugs is facilitated by abundant supplies of raw opium easily obtained. When the application of a strict system of limitation of manufacture in the Western countries of Europe made it practically impossible for the illicit traffickers to obtain supplies there, they moved off to countries where the poppy was cultivated for the production of opium and where the control was inadequate. Clandestine factories first sprang up in certain countries of the Near East. When the control was tightened in these countries as a result of effective measures taken by the Governments concerned, the traffickers moved off again to the Far East. Large quantities of dangerous drugs, often made in the crude state in remote districts with apparatus of the most primitive kind, began to be, and are still being, produced in the Far East, and for some years have created a serious problem, not only for China, but also for other countries, as such drugs found their way into the United States of America, Canada, Egypt and other countries."

When summarizing these distressing developments, the members of the Advisory Committee must have been fully aware that these conditions were growing steadily worse. The unsettled political situation in the East and the shifting of European frontiers are constantly stimulating the illicit movement of raw opium from one country to another and the illicit trade in opium is more extensive than it has been for a very long time.

When the members of the Advisory Committee sat as a Preparatory Committee in May, 1938, to discuss the basic issue of raw opium, they confronted the most far-reaching task they had as yet undertaken. In the East, of course, smoking and eating opium has never ceased to be a vital consideration since the days of the East India Company, but in the West the poppy plant as a social problem had been concealed for years behind the powerful derivatives of opium. Now opium itself had been brought out into the open.

At most of the earlier meetings of the Advisory Committee, the representatives of the countries manufacturing drugs had dominated the proceedings. At this twenty-third session the countries producing raw opium were the important factor. For they would be the nations to suffer financial losses if an international agreement should eventually result from the deliberations of the Committee.

The representatives of these countries reported to the Committee the positions regarding opium production in their respective territories. The statements of the delegates indicated that a varying degree of enthusiasm was felt by their governments about reducing their licit poppy cultivation.

The representative of China, which now produces more opium than any other country in the world, went farther than many of his colleagues on the Committee. He contended that the suppression of the illicit traffic and the limitation of the production of raw opium was not enough. Instead his country believed that any future convention drafted by the Advisory Committee regarding

the limitation of opium production must make an effort to suppress entirely all non-medical use of opium.

This far-reaching suggestion had already been discussed in the preparatory work of the Advisory Committee, which had reported to the May session a general agreement amongst its members "that the results of the future convention should be the abolition of the use of prepared opium and a corresponding decrease in the production of raw opium."

The Chinese representative referred to this passage in the Committee's report, but implied that it was rather vague as no time limit had been proposed.

"The future convention," so the Chinese delegate contended, "must set a time limit for the final suppression of the use of prepared opium, with a substantial annual reduction of the production of raw opium if an effective result is desired."

In view of India's persistent attitude regarding the eating of opium, the Indian representative could not have been expected to commit himself to this Chinese suggestion. He somewhat vaguely assured the Committee of the collaboration of his country "indicating that the principal object to be achieved was to ensure that production was limited to present world needs as authorized by the Governments concerned."

The delegates from some of the other Governments represented confined themselves to telling their fellow members on the Committee what their Governments had already done to reduce opium production. The Turkish representative stated that "at the cost of considerable sacrifices" the cultivation of the poppy, which had formerly

been carried on in sixty-two provinces was now limited to seventeen provinces in Turkey. Much land which had been used for poppy cultivation was now used for beet-root, cotton and tobacco crops, and the Turkish State Opium Monopoly had regulated prices, and eliminated middlemen in the trade by establishing a system of direct purchase.

In the statement by the Turkish representative there are passages which are significant of the fear already felt by many producing countries that the "social, economic and financial" sacrifices involved in any effective reduction of opium production will perhaps be too great.

"Turkey," so the representative said, "was ready to do all in her power to ensure the success of the work of the Committee, even if other sacrifices should prove to be necessary, only, however, on condition that limitation was based on principles of justice and equity and involved an equal distribution of duties and sacrifices as between all producing and consuming countries."

The representative of Yugoslavia also told the Committee what his country had done to decrease production. In his general attitude towards a convention he agreed with the Turkish delegate, insisting that in framing any such international convention, "the legitimate interests" of producing countries should be carefully considered. He concluded his statement with a remark which makes one wonder whether indeed all the members of the Advisory Committee were aware of the real meaning of international agreements generally, or whether, in an indirect manner, he was accusing some country or another of bad faith.

The future convention, the representative of Yugoslavia

said, "can only be applied if all the countries concerned adhere to it and, in the first instance, the countries which produce and use raw opium."

The representative of Iran, who, as he said at once, was not an expert on the subject of opium, and was therefore unable to discuss technicalities, merely reported that his Government was willing to co-operate with other countries.

The representative of Bulgaria, on the other hand, went into considerable detail. He suggested that the common measure for limiting and controlling the cultivation of the opium poppy and the production of raw opium should be not the area subject to sowings—a difficult matter to determine—but the quantity of raw opium fixed for the annual production of each country by means of a system of quotas to be assigned to each producing country by an international body.

The Bulgarian representative, in common with many other members of the Committee, felt very strongly about the financial sacrifices which countries producing opium would be called upon to make if a limitation convention actually came into force.

"If the producing countries," as this Bulgarian said, "accepted sacrifices to achieve the humanitarian object in view, it is only reasonable that attention should be given to the claims which they presented."

When one considers how much money governments as well as individuals have made out of opium for decades, one cannot help wondering whether producing nations would ever make these sacrifices, even if private cultivators of opium were persuaded to do so. And, as was pointed

out at this 1938 session of the Committee, unless all the producing countries co-operated, no workable international convention could be drafted, and much less become effective.

The revenue still available to Governments from opium prepared for smoking, is well illustrated by conditions in the Straits Settlements. Opium is a government monopoly in the Straits Settlements as well as in the Malay States. The raw opium imported into the Colony is then manufactured and distributed as Chandu. The bulk of this raw opium comes from India and Iran. The retail sales are rigidly controlled. Chandu is sold only to registered addicts, and no one is included in the list of addicts without a medical certificate. At the present time there are about 35,000 addicts in the Straits Settlements, the great majority of which are Chinese. The price of Chandu is always kept at a very high level, so that the sales to the addict will not be easy, and yet profits will not suffer. John Gunther, who recently investigated the opium situation in the Colony, reported that the price of raw opium is about one Straits dollar per tahil (one and one third ounces), whereas Chandu sells for twelve Straits dollars per tahil.

Despite the severe supervision of the opium monopoly, therefore, the profits to the Straits Settlements from opium are very large and very important in the budget as a whole. Raw opium sales have shown a marked decrease in recent years, but the revenue derived from them is still almost 20 per cent of the total revenue. The following figures illustrate what a considerable sacrifice would be involved if the Straits Settlements agreed to

restricting raw opium production to strictly medicinal needs.

	Total Revenue of Straits Settlements in Straits \$	Gross Cash receipts from opium sales in Straits \$
1925	. 53,850,960	14,686,000
1930	. 32,408,000	11,568,483
1935	. 35,040,386	8,758,034
1936	. 35,124,137	8,300,000
1937	. 35,939,000	8,800,000

The Straits Settlements are by no means an isolated case of Government revenues from opium at the present time. In their Report, published in 1930, the Commission of Enquiry into Opium Smoking in the Far East urged the Governments concerned to find a way to balance their budgets without the opium revenue. The relation of these opium revenues to the Governments' total incomes make it very clear what a limitation of opium cultivation would mean in the East.

The Commission of Enquiry reported that in 1929, the percentage of the total revenue of the colonies and territories made up by opium were as follows:

Territory	Total Revenues Per Cent of
Brunei (British) . . . . .	19.15
Sarawak (British) . . . . .	13.9
British North Borneo . . . . .	19.2 (in 1925)
Netherland Indies . . . . .	6.35
Siam . . . . .	15.81
Indo-China and Kwang-Chow Wan (French) . . . . .	4.7
Hong Kong (British) . . . . .	9.6
Macao (Portuguese) . . . . .	22.16
Formosa (Japanese) . . . . .	2.72 (in 1925)
Kwantung Leased Territory (Japanese) . . . . .	6.4
Burma (British) . . . . .	3.14
Straits Settlements (British) . . . . .	15.1
Federated Malay States (British) . . . . .	12.3 (in 1925)

<i>Territory</i>	<i>Total Revenues</i>	<i>Per Cent of</i>
Jehore . . . . .	. 23·0	
Kedah . . . . .	. 26·78	
Perlis . . . . .	. 30·15	
Kelantan . . . . .	. 16·8	
Trengganu . . . . .	. 17·70	

These figures proved, if proof was needed, to what an extent raw opium was connected with revenues. And having decided to go to the root of the matter, the whole problem of smoking opium had to be discussed at the meeting of the Advisory Committee. The Committee later reported on this vital point to the League Council:

“Considering that the gradual and effective suppression of opium smoking is the adopted policy of the Governments concerned, in accordance with Article 6 of The Hague Convention, the question was raised whether any limitation scheme which might result should make provision for raw opium required for the manufacture of prepared opium for smoking. During the discussions, certain members suggested that the proposed convention should provide for reduction by a specified percentage per annum of raw opium to be produced to supply raw material for smoking-opium.”

The Advisory Committee was “happy to report” to the Council that “the Governments concerned were prepared to agree to far-reaching measures aiming at a final suppression of opium smoking and that this situation would have to be taken into account by the future Conference.”

This optimism must not be taken too seriously, for the technical difficulties to be overcome until such a “gradual and effective suppression” could be realized are exceedingly

great. If and when a Conference is summoned for the discussion of raw opium limitation there will be the usual heated arguments among representatives of various nations concerning production quotas to be allowed each country. Then it will not be easy for the delegates to agree on the share of the world export trade to be allocated to each nation.

Apart from these technical considerations a far more fundamental problem will have to be solved. The limitation of drug manufacture was an industrial problem, whereas the limitation of raw opium is purely agricultural. The yield of the poppy is constantly affected by climatic conditions, and this would make it extremely complicated to draw up any production plans in advance.

At best, therefore, the formulation of an opium limitation convention will be an intricate undertaking, but over and beyond these complications the report of the Committee's session does not seem to reflect enough determination to give cause for any real hope. The general principle of limitation was accepted by the Committee, it is true, but, as was the case in the early days of manufactured drugs limitation, the Committee's report is full of vague words like "finally," "if necessary and as far as possible," "temporarily."

"... The Governments of the producing countries," to quote one of these vague passages, "would themselves naturally endeavour to adapt, if necessary and as far as possible, their production to the requirements of the export trade." Or another concerning the main principles on which a future convention might be based: The production of raw opium for the manufacture of prepared

opium is to be limited "until opium smoking has been finally suppressed and subject to any provisions with regard to limitation before final suppression which may be embodied in the future convention."

The compromising attitude of the Committee was most clearly reflected in the section of its report dealing with the amount to which production of raw opium is to be limited:

"Present world requirements of raw opium are determined by the amounts of this raw material needed for the manufacture of prepared opium and for internal non-medical consumption (e.g., eating). There was general agreement that the aim of the convention was to reduce the production of raw opium to the quantities necessary for the world's medical and scientific needs, allowing temporarily for the requirements of the opium smoking Monopolies and providing also for the internal non-medical requirements already existing in certain producing countries."

The future requirements of opium may be influenced by a factor not yet taken into account by this proposal, but already discussed by the Committee. This is a new scientific method of eliminating opium in the manufacture of drugs and extracting opium alkaloids directly from the poppy straw and capsules. In 1936, according to the Advisory Committee, 1,400 kilograms of morphine were extracted from poppy straw. It is not impossible that the poppy plant might, one day, replace raw opium as a raw material for the manufacture of opium alkaloids. This would dislocate any estimates of raw opium requirements, create a need for new definitions under a future

convention and make commercial subterfuges possible just as they have been used by smugglers in the case of manufactured drugs.

Such subterfuges in connection with raw opium are possible already. In Poland, for instance, as the representative on the Committee said, poppy is cultivated essentially for seed, which is used for foodstuffs and for industrial purposes. It would be very easy for illicit producers of opium to pretend that their poppy crops too were used only for legitimate agricultural production.

Such possibilities of smuggling do not make the future of restriction seem very promising, and at present even the legitimate supply is far too great. In 1936 this legitimate world production of raw opium was twice as large as the world's legitimate demands for the manufacture of drugs. The world production in 1936 (and this figure excludes China, Manchukuo and Afghanistan) totalled 2,300 tons, while the world's legitimate consumption was only 1,120 tons. Another disquieting development was that in 1936 the raw opium production was 660 tons greater than in 1935, and estimated stocks rose from 2,550 tons to 3,474 tons.

These figures cover only the yields of legitimate opium production. No one can estimate the dimensions of illicit crops grown in the East, which are secretly converted into drugs and then smuggled into the illicit trade from where they ultimately reach the addict. The extent of the illicit trade in raw opium can, however, be judged by the number of seizures reported to the Advisory Committee. And it should not be forgotten that the number of illicit raw opium consignments which remain undiscovered

is far greater than the shipments seized by the Government authorities concerned.

The illegal trade in raw opium is being carried on all over the world. Practically no country is free from it, and the League reports that "seizures of raw opium have been specially reported from the United States of America, Aden, Austria, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Turkey, Egypt, India, Portuguese India, the Union of Indo-China, the Straits Settlements, the Netherland Indies, Siam, Hong Kong, Barbados, Macao and China."

The Advisory Committee's reports on the quantities and localities of these seizures are interesting as they reflect how widespread at the present time is the illegal distribution of raw opium from which the contraband manufacture and trade in drugs is supplied.

The Committee concluded that the largest seizures were, as usual, made in the Far East, where they were also most numerous. In the United States, sixteen seizures were specially reported in which  $75\frac{1}{2}$  kg. were involved.

From Austria, 2 seizures of raw opium were specially reported, one of 62 kg. Both of these cases point to a continuance of the smuggling of raw opium from Balkan countries, with France as probable destination.

In Turkey there were 7 seizures of raw opium specially reported, amounting to about 399 kg., and in 1938 a large seizure of 210 kg.

As regards Egypt, seizures of raw opium were less frequent than in 1936, but they involved a larger total quantity. In 1936, there were 17 cases, involving over 80 kg., whereas in 1937, 13 cases, involving about 150 kg.,

were specially reported. Most of the opium came by way of Syria.

A large seizure of nearly 37 kg. was made as a result of information received concerning a gang of smugglers who had arranged to smuggle drugs by aeroplane into Egypt from Syria and Palestine.

India reported 8 seizures—2 in Calcutta, 4 in Bombay and 2 in Madras. One of those reported in Madras involved 136 kg. of excise opium, which the accused were attempting to smuggle to Ceylon.

From Aden, 2 seizures were specially reported, involving altogether about 2½ kg. The interesting point about these seizures is that the opium was stated to be the produce of the Kingdom of the Yemen.

Special reports of seizures in the Union of Indo-China were received for the first three-quarters of 1937. During the first quarter, the principal seizures totalled about 150 kg., and during the second quarter about 122 kg. The report on the third quarter contains the following information: 386 police reports were drawn up, 144 persons were arrested and 141 sentenced; 233 kg. of raw opium and 23 kg. of prepared opium were seized.

For the Straits Settlements, the usual monthly reports were sent in. The total quantity seized in 1937 amounted to a little less than 8 kg.

The Netherlands Indies sent in seven special reports on seizures of raw opium, involving just under 322 kg. It was all of Iranian origin.

Siam forwards quarterly reports, the reports for the first two quarters having been received and covering seizures of raw opium amounting to 188½ kg. In addition,

a report of a seizure of about 323 kg. in October, 1937, was communicated. This opium came from the Shan States.

Like the Straits Settlements, Hong Kong furnishes monthly reports. Seizures reported for 1937 amounted to 796 kg. In one case, the seizure amounted to 200 kg. of raw opium and 102 kg. of prepared opium.

The seizures specially reported by Macao during the year were not many and involved small quantities.

A seizure of 40 kg. was reported by the Bulgarian Government. This opium was intended for export to Antwerp. A well-known trafficker was arrested in connection with this case.

France made special reports on 3 seizures. The total amount involved in these was 47 kg. One seizure involved 40 kg., which was seized at Marseilles on board a vessel coming from Réunion. It had been concealed in an oil-tank not used since 1934.

As regards the situation in China, the quantity of raw opium specially reported as confiscated was 60½ kg. This figure includes seizures made in the International Settlement, Shanghai (20 kg.) and the French Concession in Shanghai (6 kg.). The China figures are stated to be incomplete.

These seizures, and the ultimate increase in addiction they imply, make it glaringly obvious that the Advisory Committee should make an effort to act quickly. But the outlook is bad, for the work of the Opium Committee as well as that of many other Committees will, of course, be greatly hampered by the cuts in the League Budget which will go into effect this year. Raw opium was on

the verge of being controlled, if only "gradually" when the Advisory Committee met last summer, but these Budget cuts, which will curtail the Committee's activities, as well as other factors, make it appear that raw opium will not as yet be properly dominated by our civilization.

INDIA would, of course, be considerably affected by any restriction of raw opium production, but such a limitation would no longer concern revenues derived from exports to China or other foreign markets. For India, which developed the Chinese demand for opium and thus presented to the world the modern opium problem as we know it, has reduced the cultivation of the poppy to such an extent that exports have practically ceased. At the present time Indian opium is exported in small quantities only to Burma and Aden, to Zanzibar, and to the French Settlements which, territorially speaking, are a part of India itself. Apart from these exports, all Indian opium is used for domestic consumption. Opium has become a purely internal issue.

In view of this reduction of exports, an indubitable achievement, the defensive attitude regarding the Indian opium trade still assumed by some Englishmen in India seems strange. They protest too much. The opium

article in the *India Year Book* is typical of this attitude. The contributor to the *Year Book* writing about the *Opium Trade* appears to be very much afraid of attack. We quote from the last *Year Book*, the one for 1937-38.

“Mention opium,” this paragraph says, “and half the Western World directs its thoughts to India, as though India were a most unscrupulous producer of the most noxious drug on earth. Refer to the League of Nations’ proceedings in regard to opium and again, mainly under the leadership of American representatives, one finds India and the Government of India held up to humanity as traffickers in opium and thereby obstacles to making the world a better place to live in. In fact, neither India nor the Government of India has anything to be ashamed of in its opium history. Whatever may be the case in other countries, centuries of inherited experience have taught the people of India discretion in the use of the drug and its misuse is a negligible feature in Indian life. Abuse of its properties is rarer in India than the abuse of alcohol in Western countries. So much for the internal position.

“The records as regards exports is equally clean. India has never driven hard bargains to secure the sale of the product overseas—where it has been bought, the reason is its superiority over other supplies, because of the stringent regulations by which its manufacture has always, under the British authorities been regulated in India, in order to secure the purity and cleanliness of the finished product. Directly any importing country has expressed a desire to have the trade reduced the Government of India have responded by stiffening their restrictions on export. There have, in recent years, mainly at the instance

of America, been numerous international conferences with a view to making opium and drugs derived from it more difficult to obtain and in every case it has been found that India has already given the lead in the special regulations which it was proposed to lay down."

Official Government Reports are more reserved in tone than the *India Year Book*. They do not dwell upon the unpleasant part of the Indian export trade in opium. Instead they emphasize the recent success in the reduction of exports. The Government is justifiably proud of this achievement, which is frequently mentioned in connection with the social progress said to have been made in the Indian Empire.

There is one annual report from India which has the curious title of "Moral and Material Progress and Conditions of India." In the last edition of this progress report (for 1934-35, published in 1937) the opium situation, presumably a moral progress, is described:

"It is unnecessary to reiterate in this report what has already been said in previous ones in regard to the drugs problem, another matter of international concern, and of India's contribution to its solution. It will suffice to mention that though formerly one of the principal opium-producing countries of the world, her actual exports of this drug have for some years been appreciably less than permitted by the international agreements which now govern the matter. In pursuance of the policy (announced in 1926) of steadily reducing exports till they cease entirely, poppy cultivation in 1934-35 was about 3.8 per cent of the area sown in 1912-13 (the last year before exports to China were stopped) and about

9.3 per cent of the area sown in 1925-26 (the last year before the policy of steady reduction in other exports was adopted). . . .”

This progress has continued. By 1935, the cultivation of poppy in British India has been reduced by 90 per cent as compared with 1926. In the Indian States, where a further reduction is being planned, the area under poppy cultivation was reduced by nearly a third between 1926 and 1935.

At present the chief areas under cultivation are in the United Provinces of British India and in certain States in Central India and in others South-West of Central India, where most of the Indian Opium is produced. Poppy is also grown in some states in the Himalayas, but these crops are opium consumed locally. The opium from Central India and the United Provinces is bought up by the Government of India, and then shipped to the Government factory at Ghazipur, where it is standardized. Then this opium is sold by the Government to the native population. The present Government revenue from opium is based on this “excise opium.”

As far as exports are concerned, the restriction of cultivation during the last decades is encouraging, though it has come far too late to help China or fundamentally to improve the international drug situation. The decline in cultivation has, however, reduced opium in India to a purely domestic issue. For the Government this issue is a financial one: for the native population it is a question of public health.

The production figures alone can give one no idea of the seriousness of this internal social problem. To under-

stand the situation one must refer to statistics showing the opium stocks on hand in India. In the report of the Indian Government to the Advisory Government in Geneva, the Government admits that these stocks "are high," though it is optimistically emphasized that "those held by the Government of India are gradually being reduced."

The stocks held by the Government at the end of 1933 amounted to 1,294 tons; in 1936 they had been reduced to 839 tons. The stocks held by the Indian States, on the other hand, are rising. They rose from 175 tons in 1929 to 384 tons in 1933, and to 399 tons in 1934 (the latest year for which figures are available). One of the most depressing factors in the Indian opium position becomes clear in connection with these stocks: there is a great divergence between accepted principles and actual practice. The Government admits that high surplus stocks are extremely dangerous, as they might so easily be made available to smugglers and to the illicit trade, and yet no one has ever suggested making a clean sweep and destroying them.

At the Conference of the Opium Growing States in 1927, the Viceroy said: "In the States taken as a whole there are, as we know, enormous stocks of opium for which there is at present no legitimate outlet. There is also extensive cultivation of the poppy which is retarding the absorption of these stocks . . . what answer can they (the Government of India) give to the Commission of the League of Nations . . . when they draw attention to the formidable accumulations held by private persons in the States, and to the potential danger which they con-

stitute from the international point of view? For the statistics of seizures show clearly enough that a stream of smuggled opium is flowing from the States towards the seaports. . . ."

When the figures of stocks are regarded independently, they make gloomy reading, but they become more distressing still when they are correlated with other data compiled by the Opium Advisory Committee. Perhaps it is as well that these various figures are indeed rarely put together: the result cannot possibly make anti-opium workers feel very hopeful.

One must take the statistics for 1935, as this is the last year for which the figures necessary for comparison have been published. These figures show that the licit production of raw opium in British India and in the Native States for 1935 was 337,011 kg. Exports were 18,945 kg. 4,100 kg. were used in the licit manufacture of drugs. This leaves a surplus of 313,966 kg. or 309 tons, for home consumption in India. If the stocks of 839 tons (held by the Government of India) and 399 tons (held by Native States at the end of 1934 which may have risen again) are added to the production surplus of 309 tons, one finds that 1,547 tons are available for domestic eating or smoking. According to the estimate made by the Advisory Committee the total legitimate requirements for the entire world for manufactured drugs is only 1,120 tons. This comparison will indicate the gravity of the situation in India, for this entire supply has no legitimate outlet except the domestic market.

Opium has reacted like a boomerang on India. The morale and the efficiency, not to mention the health, of

the native population is now endangered by the drug, just as, a century and more ago, Indian opium threatened and then demoralized large sections of the Chinese population. Obviously, too, the Indian Government would undertake some drastic action, if now as then, the revenue were not involved. For opium continues to make money for India, though less than it made formerly; opium is a going concern. The revenue derived from the sale of eating and drinking as well as smoking opium, is still a considerable item in the budget.

There are retail shops all over India licensed to sell "opium and intoxicating drugs" to the native population. Here the natives can buy opium quite openly.

According to the Statistical Abstract for British India, there were in 1935-36 as many as 15,751 of these shops in British India. In Bombay, for instance, there are 2,350; in Bengal 2,547; in the United Provinces 3,211; in Bihar and Orissa 2,276; in the Punjab 1,060.

The Government revenues from these shops, as the following table shows, have remained steady during recent years:

Year	<i>Revenue from Opium</i> (in rupees)	<i>From Other Drugs</i> (in rupees)
1931-32	2,81,36,817	1,63,05,058
1932-33	2,63,45,865	1,60,93,824
1933-34	2,53,53,588	1,58,48,292
1934-35	2,51,78,379	1,60,99,533
1935-36	2,44,61,676	1,65,31,394

One is frequently given the impression that the Government of India does not feel entirely comfortable about these revenues. Since the formation of the Advisory Committee, and the publicity given its work, the world

as a whole has been told too much about the disastrous effects of drugs to put any retail seller of narcotics, such as the Government of India, completely at his ease.

Sometimes the old theories of the nineties are disinterred and the public is assured that opium is entirely harmless. In a book recently published (1938) by His Majesty's Stationery Office on the *Social Services of India*, this antiquated point of view is emphasized in the article on public health by Sir John McGaw. He writes:

"Europeans have a tendency to exaggerate the evils of the opium and other drug habits which exist in India. . . . Indeed many people who have lived long in India have hardly ever seen an opium addict. Opium is taken by the mouth in small quantities by large numbers of people, but everything goes to show that very few opium-eaters become slaves of the habit. Probably the average Englishman suffers greater injury from alcohol than the average Indian does from opium. Opium smoking which is much more pernicious is rarely practised except in certain parts of Assam, the Central Provinces and Berar. . . ."

Officially, the Government of India agrees with Sir John McGaw, but the Government now takes the trouble to explain why the old policy of approving the eating of opium has been maintained. The Government has declared that it is "neither practical nor desirable to depart from the traditional policy of tolerating the moderate use of raw opium (and of hemp drugs such as *charas*, *ganka* and *bhang*), while using every possible measure to prevent abuse."

All this sounds very straightforward, but the Government's uneasiness is frequently reflected in curious contra-

dictions of policy. There is undoubtedly a conflict, a duality in the mind—if governments have minds—of the Government of India whenever the subject of drugs is approached. For instance: though opium and drugs are considered harmless when taken by Indians, they are considered very bad for Englishmen. One feels that a British soldier who took opium or drugs regularly would be called by the harsh name of addict. Certainly opium eating is not encouraged in the British Army stationed in India, though the men are living under the same climatic conditions as the Indians. It is said that British soldiers who form the opium or drug habit are dismissed from the Army.

Another thing which is strange is that the Government persists in its policy that opium eating is far less harmful than opium smoking.

The writer once discussed the question of opium in India with an English expert, whose integrity cannot be questioned. He remarked how greatly the situation had improved and then added as an afterthought:

“Except, of course, eating, that goes on, but it is so much better than smoking.”

Physicians do not agree with this opinion. Medical experts as a whole contend that eating is worse for the health and the character of regular consumers of opium than smoking. Many doctors have observed among their own patients that eating undermines the stability and reliability of addicts even more quickly than smoking does.

An article published in October, 1936, in the Irish Journal of Medical Science on *Opium Addiction and its Treatment*, describes in detail the effects of smoking and

eating of opium in Burma. The writer of this article, Dr. Gerard Kelly of the Indian Medical Service, has made a long and thorough study of the subject at first hand.

Dr. Kelly considers opium smoking, "the least harmful form of addiction" and disagrees fundamentally with the official view regarding opium eating.

"As compared with opium eating," Dr. Kelly writes, "it (smoking) involves a more laborious preparation and method of intake; the quantity required to produce the desired effect is greater and the desire to increase the dose is less marked. Furthermore eighty-five per cent of the alkaloidal content of opium is destroyed in the process of combustion, leaving fifteen per cent opium alkaloids contained in smoke. Morphine, however, can withstand a temperature of 160-200° C., and thus it imparts to opium smoke its deleterious effect. At all events absorption is slow and the opium smoker may carry on for years without any troublesome symptoms or signs developing."

In Dr. Kelly's opinion, the practice of eating opium "is more pernicious than opium smoking and owing to its greater expense the opium eater is potentially a morphine injector inasmuch as injection is the cheapest method."

The enlightened public in India is beginning to realize that eating or drinking opium is quite as harmful as smoking. There is now a considerable movement, among progressive Englishmen as well as among Indians, against the Government sales of opium. Anti-opium work is being carried on all over India. It has sometimes been suggested that the only solution of the opium problem would be to emancipate it from revenues, that is to say, the Government should gradually give up its drug traffic

and wean the people of India away from addiction. Such a step, which would involve financial sacrifices and readjustments, would not, of course, for many years, stop the illicit trade which is carried on in India as it is in other countries. In India, as elsewhere, only a severe limitation of raw opium production to medicinal needs would really solve the problem, and such a limitation would be extremely difficult to achieve in a country where so many of the inhabitants, as it were, can grow opium in their own back gardens.

So far the movement to end the wholesale opium addiction of the Indian population is only beginning to be felt. The transfer of the control of excise opium from the Central Government to the Legislative Councils of the provinces was an important step. In practice the constructive efforts of many of the Legislative Councils have been interrupted by disagreements with the provincial executives or the Central Government, which is responsible to the League of Nations for India's opium policy. But without this decentralization, conditions might have become worse in a number of the provinces.

It is believed by many people that eventually any real opium reform in India will not come from the Government but from the people. In August, 1921, Gandhi organized a campaign against opium in Assam, where addiction was extremely bad. Everywhere in the province his followers preached against opium. They picketed the licensed shops and tried to make their compatriots understand the devastating effects of drug taking. Unfortunately these activities of enlightenment were stopped. Many of Gandhi's followers were arrested on the grounds

of "civil disobedience," but he had awakened public opinion, and addiction has decreased in Assam since 1921.

In Orissa, too, the work of reform is beginning. The great poverty in that province has never decreased opium consumption. Many poor natives buy opium rather than food. In 1931-35, for instance, when the economic depression was at its worst, the consumption of opium increased in Orissa. "Baby doping" in this province is said to be worse than in other districts of India. Working-class mothers of Orissa continue to give their infants opium to keep them quiet while they are at work and away from home during the day.

In the summer of 1938, the Orissa Government finally decided to initiate a policy of opium prohibition in the Balasore District, where consumption is the highest. In this district, many opium shops are to be closed. A few will be left open as a safeguard against smuggling. A special staff will be recruited to try to prevent smuggling, addicts will be registered and curative centres will be established for them.

These sporadic attempts to rid India of opium are a good beginning, but no more. The great hope of all anti-opium workers is in Congress, which believes that no compromise is possible and that only a complete prohibition of the sale of opium except under a medical certificate is absolutely necessary. The solution of the opium problem in India, therefore, depends upon the future of Congress. The English have had a century and a half to solve this problem and so far they have not succeeded. The Indians' instinct of self-preservation should give them the force to cope with opium more effectively.

It is a significant fact that in 1909, the Powers concerned chose Shanghai as the meeting place for the first international conference to discuss opium. For in our century the problem of opium and its derivatives has been centred in China.

Ever since the East India Company began shipping the drug into China on a large scale, China has been carrying on an incessant warfare against opium and against those individuals and groups of individuals, both foreigners and her own corrupt officials, who have been equally determined to make money out of the opium trade and thus out of addiction.

Apart from the usual smoking opium, all sorts of mixtures of opium and its derivatives have become popular among Chinese addicts. Here is a list, for instance, of the drugs which can be bought at the present time in the *Yang Hangs*, the opium shops in the Japanese Concession of Tientsin.

1. Heroin smoked with cigarettes.
2. White powder, also smoked with cigarettes.
3. Yellow powder, similar to white powder, but for smokers "with more advanced craving."
4. Sweet pills, also called Golden pills, smoked with a pipe.
5. *K'uai Shang K'uai*, which means "Quick up Quick," smoked with a pipe.
6. Paper rolls, rubbed between the palms of the hands.
7. Black plaster, a dust of which is scraped off and smoked with cigarettes.
8. Opium.
9. Morphine.
10. Cocaine.

The story of China's efforts to free her country from opium is a tragic one. Again and again it seemed as though her struggle was on the verge of a final success. But again and again some outward event intervened and prevented her from eradicating the spread of opium.

Besides, China has suffered more than have other nations from the dangers of smuggling. It should never be forgotten that her smuggling trade was originally organized and supervised by powerful foreign countries. In China, therefore, the contraband traffic in opium and drugs was given firm roots from the very beginning. Illicit channels of distribution had a chance of becoming a tradition far older than the principles set up in recent years against smuggling by the Advisory Committee of the League of Nations.

All these difficulties, however, never deterred the Chinese authorities. In 1906, before the Republic was



理 藏 置



1. Hiding place for drugs in Japanese factory in Hankow  
2. Entrance to factory



proclaimed, the energetic Dowager Empress made a magnificent effort completely to wipe out the drug evil from her country. In that year an Edict was issued according to which opium was to be suppressed within a period of ten years.

For a few years the effects of this Edict were promising, but then came the Great War, upsetting the internal administration of so many countries including China.

Besides, in 1917, China suffered a defeat as far as opium was concerned. On this occasion the setback came from one of her own people. A high Official of the Republic, the Vice-President, bought £4,000,000 worth of Indian opium and sold it to his countrymen for a large profit.

This scandalous importation of large quantities of opium was particularly serious at a time when the Great War tended to undermine the work of reform which had already been achieved. After the War China went on trying to get rid of opium. The Criminal Code of 1928 prohibits the sale, possession, importation and exportation of opium and its derivatives and of cocaine. And the punishment for breaking any of these clauses of the Criminal Code are very severe. In fact, under this Penal Code, the death penalty has not been an unusual sentence for traffickers in opium and drugs.

During the eight years following the passing of this Code, China made tremendous strides against opium. A Chinese Central Commission for the Suppression of Opium was appointed and held its first conference in February, 1936. This conference was opened by General Chiang Kai-shek.

The Chinese representative to the meeting of the

Advisory Committee in Geneva in the summer of 1938 was able to report that by the end of 1936 (the last year for which statistics had been compiled by the Central Commission) considerable progress had been made.

Licit exports of opium from China to other countries as well as imports of opium into the country had been stopped. This meant that China was self-contained and opium as far as the licit trade is concerned had become a domestic problem.

The Central Commission decided that only a clean sweep would do, and for this reason China gradually abolished the cultivation of the poppy. To this end a "Six Year Plan" for the total suppression of opium was introduced. The Central Commission intends to assume a most uncompromising attitude with regard to the execution of this Plan: any opium crops grown outside the scope of the Six Year Plan will be considered illicit and destroyed if and when they are discovered.

Arrangements are being made to substitute cotton and other agricultural products in areas where poppy was formerly planted. The increasing cotton crops in the province of Shensi are an example of this substitution. In 1933 the total area under cotton in this province was 129,434 hectares; in 1936 it was 262,902 hectares.

To supervise the execution of the Six Year Plan, a commissioner for each of ten provinces had already been appointed in the spring of 1936 under the Regulations for the Enforcement of Opium and Narcotic Suppression. These provinces were: Honan, Hupeh, Anhwei, Kiangsi, Fukien, Hunan, Szechuan, Shensi, Kansu, and Yunnan. Later in the year, thirteen so-called special commissioners

were chosen to detect infringements of the new drug regulations in the provinces of Kiangsi, Chekiang, and Shantung.

The chief difficulty which these commissioners encountered in connection with the application of the new regulations are the extra-territorial rights still enjoyed by foreigners, who live in foreign concessions and cannot be tried by Chinese Courts. The Japanese Concessions of Hankow and Tientsin have always been an obstacle to any efforts to control the opium traffic, for all Concessions are popular headquarters for smugglers. The Anti-opium Bureau in Geneva reported that as long ago as 1918 about 20 tons (not kilograms) of morphine were smuggled into China every year through the Kwantung Leased Area controlled by Japan.

Despite these handicaps, the Commissioners under the Opium Suppression Commission have done constructive work. Already, under the Six Year Plan, the cultivation of the poppy has been forbidden in sixteen provinces, and a reduction of cultivation has been made in seven others. That is why China's production of raw opium has shown such a marked decrease in recent years. Production has dropped from 6,377,959 kilograms in 1934 to 3,740,209 kg. in 1935 and 1,611,698 kg. in 1936, the last year for which figures have been compiled.

While decreasing the production of opium, China has at the same time been making an organized effort to deal with the enormous number of opium smokers amongst her population. It is estimated that in 1936 there were as many as 3,500,000 registered addicts in the country,

and no one can possibly tell how many secret or unregistered smokers there are in China.

Provisions were made for the establishment of anti-opium hospitals, and by early in 1937 more than a thousand of these disintoxicating institutions had been opened for the care of addicts. Four such hospitals, for instance, had been opened in Shanghai. The Chinese authorities are trying to make registration more general so that regular consumers, who have not been listed heretofore, will go to these hospitals and be given the opportunity to have medical treatment.

In 1936 China also increased the vigilance over her smuggling trade. Severe measures for the detection of illicit shipments of heroin and other opium derivatives by parcel post have been introduced.

On the whole, before the beginning of Japan's "Holy War" in the summer of 1937, the outlook for China's renewed attempt to suppress opium was extremely promising. But the War changed all this.

As late as June, 1937, General Chiang Kai-shek publicly expressed the hope that the opium evil would be eradicated from China by 1940, but very soon it was quite clear that this could not happen. It should be emphasized in this connection that despite the War China is determined to apply the Six Year Plan. In fact, in territories still under her own control, the Plan is to be accelerated.

Destruction, inevitable in any war, soon began to curtail China's anti-opium activities. Many of the opium centres were bombed and ruined; many of the disintoxicating hospitals had to be used for the wounded.

Then, of course, there was an abrupt disintegration of

the system of registration for addicts when districts were evacuated. Besides, the control of opium was weakened in these regions, because many licensed traders had been forced to abandon their businesses, and illicit traders had stepped in and reaped the benefits.

The registered addicts too, who fled from their homes, were seriously affected. "The development," as the Chinese delegate reported to the Advisory Committee last summer (1938), "of military operations and aerial bombardment had led to an exodus of millions of refugees, among whom were a large number of registered opium-smokers who could not normally use their permits in a locality other than that in which they had been delivered. It was impossible either to authorize retailers to sell opium without requiring the production of a smoking permit or to prohibit sale to all those who had no permit. Such measures would involve a risk of inciting the persons concerned to procure opium or drugs from illicit sources. The Chinese Government had therefore decreed that smokers who could prove that they had been registered should be authorized to obtain new permits, which they must produce when purchasing opium. The sale of opium without a permit therefore remained prohibited."

These dislocations of opium control are the normal results of war, but apart from this, China has faced a far more terrible danger. For the Japanese have been carrying on what Dr. Wellington Koo called a "new form of chemical warfare": combined with her military activities, Japan has undertaken an invasion of the country by drugs, which is just as deadly as bombardment in its devastation.

The ghastly effect of this invasion by drugs is visible

wherever the Japanese Army has been. And not only is Japan making a systematic effort to undermine the Chinese population by making new addicts and encouraging old consumers of opium. More than that, Japan is re-introducing poppy cultivation in many districts. On the Island of Quemoy, for instance, near Amoy, the villagers are being forced to resume the cultivation of poppy, and a Japanese drug factory has been established on the Island.

The American representative on the Advisory Committee officially pointed out to the Committee what were the conditions in Shanghai after the Japanese occupation.

"At Shanghai," he said, "outside the French Concession and the International Concession, control appeared to have broken down completely, and the situation was causing deep concern for the future. Huge quantities of Iranian opium were reliably reported to have arrived in North China and in Shanghai, consigned to the Japanese army and to Japanese firms, while further consignments were on their way to those destinations and still others were upon order. In addition, a thousand chests of Iranian opium were reported as being held in Macao to the order of the Japanese army and Japanese firms, probably intended for sale in either South China or Shanghai. In December, 1937, the Japanese *Muko Maru*, according to reliable information, had left Bushire for the Far East carrying 1,500 chests of Iranian opium (109 tons). Further, during the first three months of 1938, Japanese firms were said to have placed orders for 2,900 chests of Iranian opium, of which 1,128 had gone forward to the Far East on the first seventeen days of March. Among the shipments made in March was a consignment of 428 chests

shipped on board the Japanese *Singapore Maru*. That opium was reported to have been distributed under the control of a Japanese officer at Tientsin, 300 cases having been sent to Shanghai, where they had been taken over by the Japanese army. The question arose as to what the Japanese army intended to do with this large quantity of Iranian opium and other consignments of the same kind, and whether, as had been reported, it was not intended to supply a large heroin factory to be set up in Shanghai, in view of the fact, moreover, that offers were being made to sell heroin in large quantities for export to the United States and Europe. The representatives of the United States of America stated that Japanese ships and Japanese firms had transported cargoes of opium to China—namely, to a country whose laws prohibited the import of opium."

The extent to which Japan has already organized these imports of opium into China is told by M. S. Bates, the well-known missionary and teacher who has lived for many years in Nanking. In a report written in November, 1938, Dr. Bates states that in Nanking four groups are chiefly responsible for this trade.

1. The Special Service Section of the Japanese Army.
2. The "Reform Government" of Nanking.
3. Independent Japanese and Korean Drug Runners.
4. Japanese firms.

Dr. Bates records that one eighth of the Chinese population still in Nanking are being slowly poisoned by heroin. Statements of this kind by men of Dr. Bates's disinterestedness are, of course, hotly denied by the Japanese,

but all eye-witnesses bear out the fact that the situation in Nanking is typical of conditions all over occupied China. An account of the present opium position by Muriel Lester, whose integrity has never been questioned, seems worth quoting in full. This account appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* for April, 25th, 1938. Miss Lester writes:

“After returning to London from China in March, 1936, various reports reached me during the following fifteen months from foreign observers, medical men, journalists, and missionaries that the drug situation in China was becoming steadily worse. Chinese mayors and magistrates were unable to prevent the sale of poisonous drugs by Japanese and Korean traders because they were protected by extra-territoriality; whereas Chinese drug traders would be severely punished, these Japanese citizens went free. On occasion, after special publicity at Geneva or as the result of representations made by some public-spirited Japanese, a raid would be undertaken by consular authority. One such led to thirty men being arrested, but other pedlars promptly took their place.”

“During 1936 the traffickers set up clinics at village fairs, advertising their skill in curing tuberculosis and other diseases. The medicine sold was always the same: heroin or morphine. The country folk were ignorant of what was happening to them. When the effect of the medicine wore off, feeling worse than ever, they returned to the clinic for advice. They were told they must persist with the treatment. All over China and into Hong Kong

these drug pedlars penetrated systematically. Opium is an old story with the Chinese—they know how to cope with its effects—but heroin and morphine are new and far more potent. They work with terrific speed: one ‘shot’ of morphine from a hypodermic syringe may lead easily to addiction. One may take a few whiffs of heroin in a cigarette without knowing that one is being inveigled into a deadly habit. One can buy a packet of heroin for 10 cents (three halfpence, or three cents U.S.A.).

“Early in 1936 the Nanking Government passed a law that every addict should present himself within the next twelve months at one or other of the centres provided for treatment and undergo a cure. After that period anyone found taking drugs would suffer the death penalty. Much remedial work was done during this period. Those who did not come voluntarily were fetched and treated under prison conditions; the others had hospital care. The expenses of all were met by their communities, rural or urban. In Tientsin one city hospital was devoted to this work and another put aside part of its premises for the same purpose. Mission and private hospitals also gave treatment to addicts.

“Since the war began I have returned once more to China and visited several cities in the North. When the new Government—the Peace Preservation Council—was set up by the Japanese in Tientsin on August 3rd, 1937, it was announced that the Nanking law was no longer applicable to the district. The drug habit resumed its tyranny. The anti-narcotic hospital work was stopped.

In the old Japanese concession is a street in which about 50 per cent of the houses are drug "joints". They are not allowed to sell to the Japanese, but foreigners and Chinese, men and women, are offered the stuff openly as they walk through the street. There is no need to stress the danger or to quote actual cases to show how perilous is this situation for the foreign soldiers stationed in Tientsin.

"In Peking I spent a morning visiting various drug "joints". There are plenty of them. (I am getting a map made of this quarter of the city, with the location of various shops.) The Japanese are no longer allowed to carry on this trade. The drug shops are all left in charge of Koreans under Japanese protection, but Chinese police arrest any Chinese trafficker whom they find. Death is the penalty. My companion, an American journalist, speaks Chinese fluently and told the traders that I was a Russian addict on my way to Shanghai. We were able to buy as much as we liked, but our usual purchase was only twenty cents' worth. Five customers bought heroin during the ten minutes we spent in one shop. Here we learned that the best grade of heroin comes from Dairen and sells for eighteen dollars an ounce. This is two and a half times as much as Tientsin heroin. Small boys were on the look-out for customers and led us genially along the "hutungs." A middle-aged procurer took us to a brothel where we purchased heroin. Here we learned that many traders had left Peking to follow the Army into pastures new, but their places are quickly filled by others. This establishment supplied the more expensive Dairen heroin as well as the Tientsin brand. A Chinese

trafficker looked very frightened when we appeared. The difference between his furtive expression and the self-assurance of all the Korean dealers was marked. We went to a house belonging to a Russian cabaret manager who owns an hotel in Tientsin. Drugs are habitually sold here, but we could not enter, as he had gone to Taiyuan to extend his business, and the two Japanese who were retailing heroin in his house, using his name to protect themselves, were not at home.

. . . . .

"The thing that troubled me most in Peking was the number of small clinics which the Japanese are opening. They are well lit and attractive. One of them displays the red cross, and most use illuminated street signs to guide passers-by on the main roads to their doors up the side streets. A crowd of rickshaws wait outside them at night. They advertise in the papers the various diseases which they cure. The procedure in many of them seems to be that each person on entering is given a cursory examination by an unqualified doctor or dispenser, and is then registered as suffering from some specific disease. After that he is allowed to buy as much heroin or morphine as he likes. Here also, on certain nights of the week, come prostitutes to renew their weekly licences. The well-known Japanese dispensary in Hatamen Street was chief retailing centre for drugs until a few months ago, when it became illegal to have drug "joints" on the main streets. Probably that is why the clinics are springing up now. We also went to the big foreign-style house where opium is regularly brought in from Jehol for distribution.

The Japanese who own the place have five cars in regular use for this purpose. Three hundred addicts were set free from the city treatment centre last week and the place was closed down. There is no longer any clinic available here for the cure of addicts. Some Japanese here are known to pay their servants or business employees half in cash, half in drugs.

. . . . .

"Last week I revisited Changli, Hopei, where I made a detailed survey in March, 1935. It has a self-respecting population, public-spirited Mayor, an excellent long-established mission-school, hospital, health centre, and agricultural centre. Since the taking of Manchuria, all this area, which includes Shanhaikuan, Lanhsien, and Chingwangtao, has been invaded, in ever-increasing numbers, by pedlars of poisonous drugs; but no other town was so well conditioned to resist the evil. The traffickers could find no one inside the city walls willing to rent them a shop. They ensconced themselves, therefore, in shanties just outside the walls. Of course they ignored the Mayor's request to them to close down their anti-social activities, their pawn-shops, gambling dens, brothels, and theatre, each of which enticed the country people to contract the drug habit. They merely answered that they were Japanese citizens and they could continue to do as they liked. The Mayor's authority extended, however, over any Chinese they might employ, and his police eventually caught one such and confiscated the drugs he was carrying and imprisoned him. The next day the Mayor found himself a prisoner in his own office by armed

ruffians who demanded the value of the drugs—two thousand five hundred dollars—and the release of the Chinese employee. He had to make payment out of his own pocket before he was allowed to move.

"I was glad to see that Changli folk are still successful in keeping the drug traffickers outside the city walls. There they continue their trade unchecked, though many have gone to follow the Army.

"A foreign Christian appealed to five Koreans newly settled in a Chinese town and running opium dens. 'Why do you come to China?' he inquired. 'We were sent here,' they answered. 'Why do you ply this trade?' he asked. 'That was the part assigned to us,' they explained.'"

The Advisory Committee in Geneva is well aware of what is happening in China. The Chinese delegate explained it to the Committee in full last summer, and the report of the American and other delegates bore out his statement. But the Advisory Committee has done nothing to stop Japan's invasion of China with drugs. In fact, when one reads the minutes of the meeting at which the Chinese opium situation was discussed, one cannot help questioning the motives of some of the members. At that meeting the Chinese representative, Dr. Hoo Chi-tsai, asked to be allowed to show the Committee a film made by the Chinese authorities during a police raid on some narcotic drug factories in the Japanese Concession of Hankow after its evacuation by the Japanese. But Dr. Hoo Chi-tsai was not allowed to show the film, and M. Delgorgé, from the Netherlands, the Chairman of the Committee, tactfully remarked that it was "better

in the interests of co-operation not to show it." Obviously the Committee did not wish to face unpleasant facts.

The population of China represents one fifth of the human race, but the Chairman of that Committee which the League had appointed to control opium was unable, or unwilling, to look at a film which told the truth.

AGAIN and again supporters of the League of Nations assure a doubtful public that without the Advisory Committee in Geneva, drug-addiction all over the world would be even more prevalent than it is. And as no one, of course, can judge with anywhere near exactitude what are the illicit exports and imports, or the secret manufacture or sales of the contraband trade, this optimism can be neither proven nor disproven.

So far the work of the Advisory Committee concerning the illicit trade has been purely preparatory. The import and export certificate system affects only the licit channels of the international drug trade; secret routes used by smugglers have not been properly guarded, chiefly because they are not known. And the Black Lists of traffickers distributed by the Committee to the Governments, as well as the Committee's 1930 Report on the illicit trade are a diagnosis rather than an attempted cure.

Obviously such a cure would be extremely difficult, because the illicit trade is very elusive. One gets a

glimpse of its vast network occasionally when one reads of the spectacular death of some notorious addict, or of the rounding up of a particularly efficient ring of international smugglers. The seizures of large shipments of illicit narcotics, too, indicate the dimensions of this contraband traffic, but it is impossible to compile definite figures concerning this trade. For the illicit manufacture and distribution of drugs is like an iceberg: only the top emerges to the surface from time to time, and as yet none of the many anti-opium activities of the League of Nations or of private organizations or reformers have begun to break up the threatening mass below.

The effects of this traffic are not as difficult to estimate as is the traffic itself, for the ultimate result of an increasing illicit trade is an increase in addiction, and physicians and municipal authorities everywhere realize how great must be the contraband trade to supply so many individual addicts. In the advanced stages, and even before, they are never difficult to detect. Dr. Lawrence Kolb, who investigated addiction for the United States Public Health Service, has briefly summarized the general characteristics of these unfortunate people.

“Morphine and heroin,” Dr. Kolb writes, “when taken in large doses, sap the physical and mental energy; lethargy is produced, ambition is lessened, and the pleasurable feeling . . . makes the addicts contented. These various effects cause them to pay less attention to work than formerly; consequently they tend to become idlers and dependents. . . . Those who depend upon the illegitimate traffic are sometimes unable to work because of discomfort and weakness due to insufficient narcotics,



*Illicit poppy cultivation seized by Egyptian police*



and at other times they stay away from their work in order to look for the drug. There are cases in this series who have gone to distant cities regularly to get an ounce of heroin or morphine, and others who have lost as many as a dozen jobs through neglecting work to meet pedlars, or through lying in bed in the morning instead of going to work because the dose that would have put energy into them was not available. Often, when these cases secure a supply after their short periods of deprivation, they take more than is actually necessary to keep them comfortable. The result is that they alternate between physical and mental irritability, and physical and mental lethargy. Both extremes make for emaciation, physical inefficiency, and unusual mental reactions. The dreamy satisfaction and the pleasurable physical thrill produced by opium in many addicts in their early experiences with it are of themselves forms of dissipation that tend to cause moral deterioration. Addicts as a rule are compelled to associate with persons of low moral character in order to continue with their addiction. Financial embarrassment resulting from idleness or the high price of peddled narcotics impels them to beg money from their friends, or to obtain it from members of their families by subterfuge, or to steal, in order to supply themselves with drugs. They suffer in manliness through feeling, what they often feel: the just contempt of the public; they suffer more through their constant fear of arrest or because of a term in a penitentiary served for having narcotics in their possession. The whole train of events above described brings about unfavourable character changes and gradual moral deterioration, and converts

what might have been fairly useful citizens into outcasts, idlers or dependents."

Reports from hospitals, prisons and courts all over the world indicate clearly that the number of addicts is not decreasing as rapidly as it should in view of the new medical treatments which have been discovered during recent years. Clearly the supply of illicit drugs is not diminishing except in a few countries.

In fact, smugglers are becoming more daring and, as the League reports, "there is some indication that they are again commencing to utilize the methods employed in 1930, particularly the practice of falsely manifesting merchandise." Seizures, too, show that smugglers are feeling more sure of themselves, for the size of illicit shipments is increasing, which reflects the fact that traffickers are less afraid of the authorities than they were a few years ago.

Nor are Governments particularly interested in undertaking radical measures for the suppression of the illicit traffic. Only six Governments—Belgium, Brazil, China, Greece, India and Roumania—have so far ratified a convention "for the repression of the illicit traffic in dangerous drugs" which was drafted by the Advisory Committee in 1936.

These discouraging developments are admitted to be true even by the Advisory Committee which investigated the illicit traffic and came to the conclusion that "although there are signs of a decrease in the volume of illicit traffic in certain parts of the world, notably the United States of America and Canada, there are unfortunately no definite signs of a general abatement of the traffic."

Reports from individual countries bear out this statement. The authorities in many territories are in a position to find out what are the prices of illicit opium and drugs, and the trend of these prices gives an indication of the supply and demand.

There are so many curious contradictions and conflicts of interests in the opium trade that it is hardly surprising to find statistics covering the prices for illegal narcotics in an official Advisory Committee Report (C. 237. M. 136. 1938, XI). On page 33 of this Report the statement of the American representative is reported. According to this statement "Raw opium prices in the illicit market underwent only a slight increase in 1937."

Then the Report continues:

"The price of prepared opium in the illicit traffic on the Pacific coast underwent a slight decrease in the early part of 1937, following the settlement of a strike of American seamen and stevedores. These prices remained fairly constant until the outbreak of Sino-Japanese hostilities, when they began to rise steadily. By the end of December, 1937, the price of prepared opium had more than doubled in certain sections of the Pacific coast area. In the Atlantic coast area, the price of prepared opium underwent little change, with the exception of a brief period in the summer and autumn of 1937, when it rose about 25 per cent. This was believed to have been due directly to large seizures of prepared opium effected shortly before. The fact that prices on the Atlantic coast have varied but little would indicate that there is no decrease in the supply available in China.

"The price of morphine in the illicit traffic remained

about the same as in 1936, in the Atlantic coast and North-Central areas, with a slight increase in the South-Central area and a marked rise in the Pacific coast area following the outbreak of hostilities in the Far East.

"The price of heroin in the illicit traffic was fairly constant in the North Atlantic coast and Pacific coast areas, but in the South Atlantic coast and South-Central areas there was an appreciable increase. It was evident that there was at times an acute shortage in the illicit traffic, despite heavy adulteration. The fluctuations in price are attributed to the frequent seizures effected and the arrest of important smugglers and distributors."

As this statement shows, the illicit traffic is now more and more dependent on China. "The Far East," the Advisory Committee records, "more especially China north and south of the Great Wall, appears to an ever-increasing extent to be the principal source and centre of illicit traffic, both in opium and manufactured drugs, Iranian opium entering the illicit traffic through China."

In the Balkan countries, too, extensive headquarters of the illicit traffic are now to be found. In Turkey clandestine factories have frequently been discovered manufacturing drugs from contraband opium, and it is believed that the illicit traffic obtains considerable supplies from Turkey at the present time.

It should be mentioned in this connection that, though by far the greatest proportion of raw opium seized in the smuggling trade comes from Iran or China, Chinese raw opium is very rarely found in the illicit traffic outside the Far East.

"In other words," as the Advisory Committee admits,

"almost all raw opium seized outside the Far East comes from Iran, but usually through China. In the Far East itself, Iranian and Chinese opium seem to be competing in the illicit traffic on fairly even terms."

On the illicit markets, opium and its derivatives have, for years, been forced to compete with cocaine, the drug made from the coca-leaf. Now, when hopeful individuals believe that the struggle against opium may soon be won, the demand for heroin, one of its most devastating derivatives, is growing. Heroin, which can be sent by post or hidden in secret containers of various kinds, is becoming a favourite drug of addiction all over the world.

Heroin and other drugs can so easily be secretly distributed that smugglers enjoy a great advantage over the men who are trying to track them down. Their pursuers are the authorities appointed by nations, and the International Police Commission, the members of which, in many countries, are already working closely with the Opium Advisory Committee of the League of Nations. This Commission, which has been active for some time in helping to suppress the manufacture of counterfeit currency, is becoming an important factor in the campaign against the illicit traffic in drugs.

In the opinion of many, the police in various countries have not yet been firm enough in their dealings with drug smugglers. One is frequently reminded of a declaration made by Colonel Arthur Woods, who, as has been mentioned, was the first police expert appointed as an assessor of the Advisory Committee.

At the fourth session of the Committee, in 1923,

Colonel Woods pointed out that the police must be more energetic. He said: "I have not been able to escape the impression in the few days during which I have had the privilege of sitting with this Committee, that there may be too much diplomacy and too little rough-shod direct police action in the fight against these narcotic outlaws. It is not a diplomatic question, gentlemen, but a pure police task, and in the contest with law-breakers as rich, as powerful, as well organized, and as far-reaching as these, the police must act strongly, and must be free from diplomatic entanglements."

When one considers the tremendous spread of addiction during recent years, one can only conclude that what Colonel Woods said fifteen years ago is true to-day. A small contraband shipment of heroin can ruin the lives of hundreds of human beings, and yet neither the international police nor the police of individual countries seem to punish the smugglers accordingly.

The punishments for these contraband traffickers are far too light. Even men responsible for very large illicit shipments are usually sentenced to only a few years' imprisonment. The penalties for the smuggling of narcotics should not be measured according to the quantities which the smuggler has actually succeeded in getting into any country. Anyone who distributes any quantity of illicit narcotics should be equally punished, for only thus can the international organization of dope pedlars finally be broken up and destroyed.

The leniency with which drug smugglers are still treated is indirectly implied in a circular letter (C.L. 37, 1935 X) issued by the Advisory Committee in 1935,

drawing the attention of the Governments to "the steps envisaged" in connection with refusing passports to persons suspected of illicit traffic or to cancel passports already issued to such persons. These suggestions have not been generally accepted by the countries represented on the Advisory Committee. No national or international law regarding passports has been drafted. These suggestions, vaguely recalled "recommendations," are repeated at every session of the Committee, and they have also been taken up by the International Police Commission. This Commission has urged individual countries to take more precautions about issuing passports to "persons having committed, or being suspected of being about to commit, offences" in regard to illicit drugs.

The families and friends of addicts, as well as social reformers, must grow exceedingly weary of "recommendations." They are particularly futile in view of the ease with which the relatively small number of smugglers who are discovered can serve a short prison sentence, pay a small fine and then renew their passports and continue on their nefarious careers.

The lack of firmness reflected in the sentences given for opium and drug smuggling is well illustrated by Great Britain, where the Dangerous Drug Acts are more rigidly observed than they are in many other countries. Great Britain has been conscientious in her observation of the various international Opium Conventions. And yet, the "narcotic outlaws" caught in England are not punished as severely as they should be.

Every year His Majesty's Government makes a report to the Opium Advisory Committee of the League of

## THE TRAIL OF OPIUM

Date of Seizure	Port of Seizure	Nationality and name of ship	Nationality and description of owner of drug	Quantity and Nature of drug	Place where accused stated he obtained the drug	Penalty imposed
Feb. 4, 1937	Hull	Norwegian: <i>Goriken</i>	Chinese: Boatswain	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. Dross	Calcutta	Fined £10 15s. including costs
Feb. 13, 1937	Liverpool	Dutch: <i>Salabangka</i>	Chinese: Fireman's cook	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ oz Prepared Opium	Calcutta	Fined £2 and £1 1s. costs, or £1 and £1 1s. costs and 11 days
Mar. 18, 1937	Liverpool	British: <i>Spondilus</i>	—	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. Indian Hemp	—	—
Mar. 19, 1937	Liverpool	British: <i>Spondilus</i>	Chinese: Boatswain	1 oz. (approx.) Prepared Opium	Curacao	Fined £2 and 10s. 6d. costs
April 1, 1937	Dundee	British: <i>Clan Graham</i>	Unknown: Lascar Fireman	4 oz. Indian Hemp	Unknown	Fined £10 and 16s. 7d. costs or 45 days' imprisonment.
July 1, 1937	Newhaven	British: <i>Paris</i>	British: Passenger	6 grammes Heroin	—	6 months' and 1 month's imprisonment in second division (concurrent)
July 2, 1937	Barry Dock, Cardiff	Dutch: <i>Alborab</i>	Chinese: Fireman	4 oz. Raw Opium	Antwerp	Fined £5 and £1 1s. costs
July 2, 1937	Barry Dock, Cardiff	Dutch: <i>Alborab</i>	Chinese: Ship's cook	12 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. Raw Opium	Unknown	Fined £10 and £1 1s. costs

# THE TRAIL OF OPIUM

259

			Yugo-Slav: Café keeper	14·9 grammes Pre- pared Opium	Unknown	2 months' imprison- ment
July 5, 1937	Swansea (seized in a street)	—	—	1 lb. 14 oz. Indian Hemp Preparation 5 phials containing 0·01 oz. Morphine Hydrochloride	—	—
Aug. 22, 1937	London	British: <i>Domola</i>	—	2 oz. Indian Hemp	Izmir	(b)
Sept. 13, 1937	London	British: <i>Bordino</i>	Stewardess	20 ampoules Pavon	Beira	Fined 5s. and 10s. 6d. costs
Sept. 16, 1937	Liverpool	British: <i>Politician</i>	Unknown: Lascar Seaman	—	Posted in Switzerland	(a) Destroyed
Oct. 4, 1937	London (Parcel Post Depot)	—	British: Unknown	6 oz. Hashish	—	—
Nov. 18, 1937	Aberdeen	British: <i>Mandasor</i>	—	1 lb. 14 oz. Hashish	—	—
Nov. 18, 1937	Gravesend	British: <i>Viceroy of India</i>	—	5½ oz. Prepared Opium	Rotterdam	Fined £2 and £2 4s. 6d. costs
Nov. 23, 1937	Ellesmere	Dutch: <i>Malvina</i>	Chinese: Ship's Cook	50 Pellets Opium	—	(b)
Nov. 27, 1937	Gravesend	British: <i>Mongolia</i>	British: Passenger (nurse)	1 oz. Indian Hemp	—	—
Dec. 13, 1937	Hull	British: <i>City of Exeter</i>	—	—	—	—

(a) In this case, the drug was imported for medical treatment in ignorance of the law, and the offender was not prosecuted.

(b) In these two cases, the drugs involved amounted to very small quantities of Morphine Hydrochloride and medicinal Opium respectively. In each case the drug was declared by the passenger.

Nations on the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs. This Report includes some very illuminating Tables. One of these (in the last Report for 1937) shows what small penalties were imposed during the year on account of illicit imports of dangerous drugs: (See pages 258 and 259.)

Naturally, to the illicit trader, the sentences imposed by the courts if and when they are caught, seem almost negligible as compared with the large profits to be made if they remain undetected. And smugglers can charge almost anything they like for their goods, because the ultimate consumer, that is to say, the addict, is an outlaw himself, and cannot complain if the prices of drugs are out of all proportion.

A pound of heroin, for instance, costs about £10 to manufacture from the opium. It is sold to the wholesale smuggler for about £70 a pound. The wholesaler sells it to the agent supplying the retailer at whatever profit he thinks he can get, and the price to the addict for a few ounces, in turn, is as high as the retailer, selling the drug wherever he finds clients, can manage to make it.

The quantity wanted at almost any price by the addict varies according to his stage of addiction, his particular temperament and his receptiveness to the effects of the drug. W. L. Treadway,<sup>1</sup> Chief of the Narcotics Division of the United States Public Health Service, studied the daily dose of opium alkaloids needed by over a thousand addicts who came under his observation. The

<sup>1</sup> Further Observations on the Epidemiology of Narcotic Drug Addiction  
Published by the U.S. Government Printing Office, 1930.

following table shows the results of Dr. Treadway's investigation.

<i>Daily Dose</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
<b>OPIUM ALKALOIDS</b>			
Less than one half-grain . . . . .	2	1	1
One half-grain but less than 1 grain . . . . .	3	3	—
1 grain, but less than 2 grains . . . . .	41	29	12
2 grains, but less than 3 grains . . . . .	76	53	23
3 grains, but less than 5 grains . . . . .	190	148	42
5 grains, but less than 10 grains . . . . .	363	292	71
10 grains, but less than 15 grains . . . . .	320	270	50
15 grains, but less than 20 grains . . . . .	154	133	21
20 grains or more . . . . .	131	106	25
Smoking opium gum, quantity unknown . . . . .	138	135	3
None . . . . .	60	52	8
Unknown quantity . . . . .	115	95	20
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>1,593</b>	<b>1,317</b>	<b>276</b>

Whatever the addict's dose may be, the pedlar can always fix his own price, unless he is afraid of detection and must get rid of his supply quickly. At any rate, the risk he takes is counteracted by the profits, and actually the risk is small, for heretofore drug smugglers have always had more imagination than the police.

When the authorities discover that morphine or heroin is brought into a country in the hollow heels of shoes, in empty watch cases or the knobs of brass bedsteads, in photographic films marked "do not open," or in hollow grindstones, in the boxes of railway carriages, or in hollow Bibles, in mandolins or other musical instruments, or plaster busts, and these secret methods have failed, then the illicit traders invent new ways of distributing their goods and maintaining their extremely high standards of profit.

Often employees of reputable firms are traffickers and hide drugs in the firms, regular shipments. When this consignment is received at its destination, a confederate takes out the drugs and passes them on to the local pedlars.

Such a case was discovered some years ago when a Chicago firm, A. B. Dick and Company, discovered a case filled with 410 tins of drugs in the company's warehouse. These narcotics had arrived in a shipment of cases of paper from Kobe, Japan. Probably, for some reason or other, the confederate in Chicago, who was to take the drugs out of the cases, had left the employment of Dick and Company before the shipment arrived.

Chemical tricks, too, are frequently used by traffickers. The simplest of these is a mixture of morphine and rice powder, the morphine is then separated from the powder by dissolving the poison in water. Another obvious trick is to tie the light case containing the drug to a bag of salt or sugar, and to throw the whole overboard before a ship reaches the port and the customs. When the salt or sugar has dissolved, the container rises to the surface and is picked up by a boat belonging to the traffickers.

The American authorities recently discovered that an apparently innocent shipment of ozokerit, a harmless mineral wax, was actually a mixture of heroin and paraffin wax. All that the smugglers would have done, had this shipment reached them, would have been to submit this mixture to a simple chemical process which would precipitate the heroin and make it ready for the retail sale.

There are so many subterfuges and dodges open to the illicit trade that it is always difficult for the authorities to catch the smugglers. The customs authorities at all

the great ports of the world are constantly on the watch for contraband drugs, but so far only isolated shipments are ever discovered.

Private aeroplanes are frequently used by smugglers, who fly over the port in order to evade the customs inspection. The United States have found it necessary to organize a regular air-patrol service to guard the Mexican frontier from drug traders who bring their goods into the States by 'plane.

Air patrols, however, and harbour police, and rigid customs supervision have not been able to prevent the regular flow of illicit drugs from one country, or one continent, to another. The chief reason seems to be that the contraband trade is really organized on an international basis. The members of this gang are bound together by a common interest in their profits and, above all, by the common danger of detection. This is a formidable opposition to the Opium Advisory Committee of the League, which consists of members whose other interests are so divergent that the threat of drugs alone has never held them together.

The international illicit traffic in drugs has roots in every country. Nationality or national interests do not matter to these smugglers; they are concerned only with one thing: the secret distribution of narcotics.

The case of the sailing ship *Mirabella*, which was discovered a few years ago, is typical of this internationalism.

The *Mirabella* was built in Hong Kong, a British Crown Colony, for the smuggling of opium from the Far East to the Pacific Coast of North America. The vessel flew the flag of Panama, and it lay in Portuguese waters at

Macao to take on cargo brought aboard from Chinese territory. This cargo was a shipment of Persian opium which had been secretly loaded at the Persian port of Bushire, and unloaded into junks off the China Coast. The captain of the *Mirabella* was a Dutchman; the Chief Engineer a German; one of the mates was a Canadian, the other an American, the crew was Chinese. The *Mirabella* was unable to land on the Pacific Coast of America, as anti-drug cutters were suspicious of her, and she finally put in at a remote Mexican harbour.

An incident like the seizure of the *Mirabella* shows up the dimensions and intricacies of the smuggling trade. Similar seizures indicate that the situation is very discouraging. The smugglers seem to be continually outwitting the authorities.

On August 16th, 1938, for instance, only a few months after the Advisory Committee completed its session, and issued its encouraging reports, the largest quantity of opium ever seized anywhere in the world during the last ten years was discovered in America. This seizure, reflecting the extent of the illicit trade, was made aboard a vessel at Brooklyn. On the vessel, owned by a local resident, the police discovered 1,330 tins, each hermetically sealed and containing opium. The total value was £120,000.

Again and again one reads of discoveries of opium or drugs hidden on vessels from the East. In November, 1938, a case of this kind was reported from New York. On the British ship *Silveryew*, 4 cwt. of opium was found by the American Customs authorities. 850 hermetically sealed tins of opium, worth £51,000, had been secreted

in a double-bottom fuel oil tank. The vessel had been searched before she sailed from Hong Kong and Shanghai, but the opium was not discovered.

The American authorities must have had reason to be suspicious, for the *Silveryew* was carefully examined by the Customs officials in Boston, but the drugs were not found. In New York, however, the officials, who must have been informed by someone, went direct to the oil tank and found the opium. The owners of the ship were fined £29,000, that is to say, £5 an ounce, though the captain was able to convince the Customs officers that neither he nor the officers nor the owners were in any way implicated.

In an interview to the *Daily Express* (November 18th, 1938), Mr. Stanley Thompson, the manager of the Silver Line owning the *Silveryew*, discussed how this opium could have been hidden on their ship.

“This,” said Mr. Thompson, “is the work of an organized gang who try it on all ships going from the Far East to America. They go to Sing Sing prison for three or four years and then come out to start all over again. Meanwhile the Company has to suffer. No one knows how they work or get the opium on board. It is a great mystery to me how they could have got that enormous amount of dope aboard without being seen. The only way they can be found out—so clever are their methods—is when one of their own gang gives them away. I think this happened in the present case.”

The helpless hopelessness reflected in Mr. Thompson’s statement is significant of the alarming fact that the drug traffic is regretfully accepted by many people as an inevit-

able evil. For some reason or other, this defeatist attitude is encouraged by many countries, whose reports concerning the smuggling situation within their frontiers are often very reserved.

England is as good an example as any of this undue official optimism. The British report to the Opium Committee claims that "addiction to narcotic drugs is not prevalent in the United Kingdom."

The Report goes on to say that the number of persons known to the Central Office, during the year 1937, as being addicted to the use of narcotic drugs was 620—300 men and 320 women. Of this total 132 were members of the medical profession, one was a dentist, five were pharmacists and two were veterinary surgeons.

The percentage of addiction to different drugs in relation to the total was:

							Per cent
Morphine	.	.	.	.	.	.	72
Diacetylmorphine	.	.	.	.	.	.	17
Cocaine	.	.	.	.	.	.	8½
Medicinal Opium	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Dihydromorphinone	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Codeine	.	.	.	.	.	.	½

Properly to understand these figures, one should know just how the Home Office defines the word "addiction," for the isolated seizures of illicit opium and drugs imported into England indicate that the contraband market must be very extensive in this country. 620 addicts are an incredibly small number, and this figure has, of course, been challenged by many physicians and experts.

The Home Office figures are also indirectly contradicted by the Press. Popular articles, based on first-hand informa-

tion collected by reporters, do not confirm the official statement that addiction is not prevalent in England.

The *Evening Standard* recently (January 2nd, 1939) published a story about the "Secrets of the Drug Pedlars" and described a London club called the "CDD" where drugs can be bought.

"... if you want heroin, or morphine, or hashish, at this club," writes the *Standard*, "there'll be more fuss. Your references will have to be checked up to see you're on the level. There may be sub-agents to deal with. Secret meeting-places, false names, and all the rest of the flumdummary that is the lady novelist's stock-in-trade.

"You'll have to pay for it, too. For dope-peddling has to be profitable because of the way the stuff is split among the agents. A pound of heroin, for instance, will cost £10 to manufacture. It will be sold to the smuggler for £70, the smuggler will sell it to the agent for a still higher figure, and it will finally be retailed to the client for £200 or more, according to the number of sub-agents employed."

Unofficial estimates of addiction, too, are far larger than those published by the Home Office. An ex-inspector of Scotland Yard, for instance, in an article recently published, claims that there are "in this country to-day no fewer than 5,000 drug addicts listed and placed under the care of doctors working in co-operation with a special department of the Home Office."

This ex-inspector also says that "in addition to these 'known addicts' there are some 30,000 persons in Great Britain suspected of taking drugs obtained from secret

sources," and he concludes this article with a plea for a severer punishment of smugglers.

"The failure," he writes, "of the control system originally formulated by the League of Nations, due in part to the huge quantities of drugs being manufactured by the Japanese in occupied parts of China, has allowed large cargoes of dope to be internationally distributed.

"It is believed that unless some new and practical international control method can be introduced, the position may become even worse than it is now.

"Meanwhile, we might perhaps inflict harsher punishment on persons convicted of dope trafficking. A sentence of six months' imprisonment for possessing enough heroin to give 500 persons a dose apiece, to set each of the recipients on the path of depravity, is totally inadequate. Yet that is the sentence which a dope pedlar received recently.

"If the sentence had been 'years' instead of 'months,' not even all the immense wealth of the drug organization for which he worked might have lured him to "re-enlist".

In view of the more realistic attitude of men like this ex-inspector, one cannot help wondering why the low figure of 620 is given by the Home Office. Perhaps the authorities do not wish to alarm the public by announcing just how terrible is the danger from drugs. But the public should be alarmed, for only when, as years ago in the case of opium itself, public opinion is again thoroughly roused, will this danger be averted. Neither the authorities in England or other countries, nor the Advisory Committee in Geneva, will be able to accomplish any lasting reforms regarding opium or drugs until they

have the co-operation of an enlightened public opinion, and the public cannot be enlightened until all the facts about drugs, no matter how unpleasant, are generally known. Obviously, such enlightenment would keep public opinion on the alert with regard to opiates. Governments always seem to spread propaganda about guns or butter more readily than they organize publicity about questions concerning public health. But such propaganda warning people of the disastrous effects of drug-addiction is not enough. It must be clear to everyone, even men and women who for some reason or other reject such a possibility, that the illicit traffic in drugs cannot be stopped until the cultivation, manufacture and distribution of drugs are not only Government controlled, but Government owned. At the present time, when so many Governments are still making profits out of the sale of drugs to native populations, Government ownership would not yet be of great benefit, but if eating and smoking opium were stopped and the production of opium and the other raw materials were curtailed to medicinal needs, the manufacture and sale of drugs by Governments instead of by private enterprise would be essential. For, as long as individuals continue to make money out of drugs, and imports and exports are only partially controlled, quantities of raw materials and of manufactured drugs will always escape into illicit channels. So far, unfortunately, the illicit trade has really nothing to worry about. Smugglers have been victorious all along the line. This disquieting fact has been admitted by the Advisory Committee in Geneva. A cautious statement to the Press in the summer of 1938 reflects the Committee's growing

uncertainty. After briefly mentioning the "great gains" contributed by the Central Opium Board, this statement continues: "It is feared, however, that political disagreements which have resulted in non-co-operation of countries in the work of the League may encourage illicit traffic."

THIS pessimistic statement of the Advisory Council in 1938 indicates that opium reformers have almost admitted defeat. It would be exceedingly good to think that the history of opium has a happy ending, that its devastating trail has been successfully checked and directed into medical channels only, that in our twentieth century a civilized institution like the League of Nations has finally put a stop to the terrible effects of this plant on mankind.

So far, however, a happy ending is not in sight. For the spread of opium, like so many other social evils, is not an isolated development, but is dependent on the general trend of society in any given age. The popularity of opium and of all drugs is stimulated by wars and revolutions and upheavals. The worse the condition of society, the more eagerly do men long for some kind of oblivion. All human beings would like to forget the distressing times in which they live and it is only natural that to this end weak people reach out readily for narcotics.

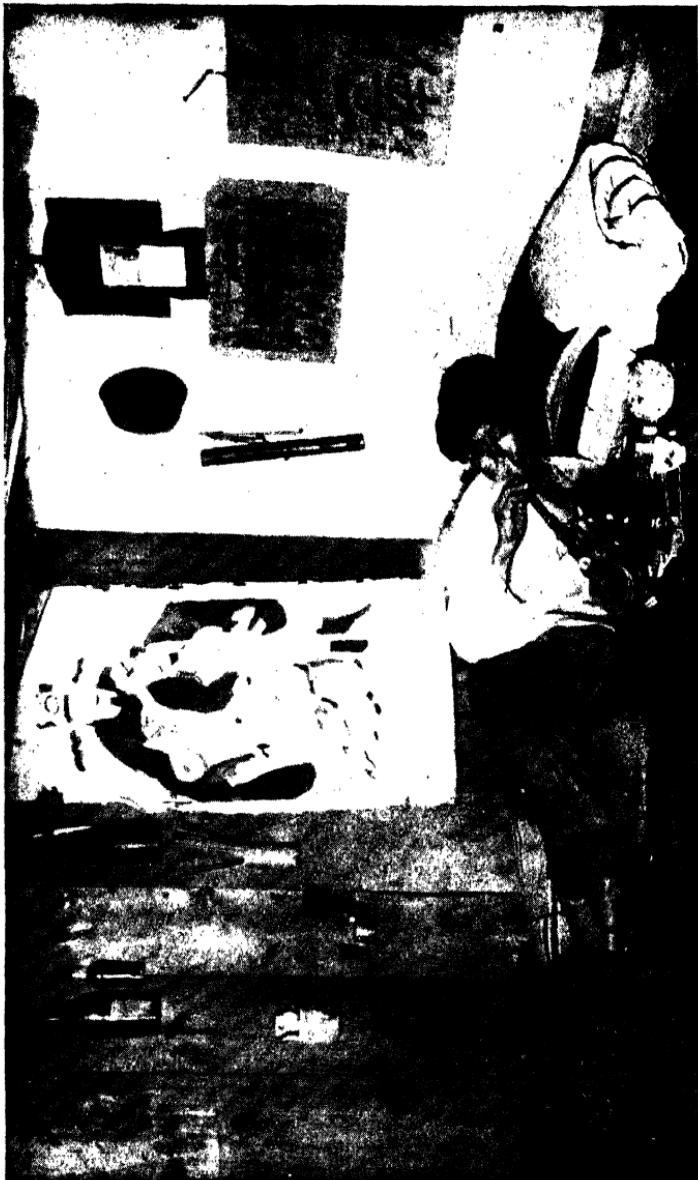
To-day, in 1939, when political unrest, and wars and

threats of wars are creating an atmosphere of restlessness, a feeling of tense insecurity, there is little chance that drug addiction will be curbed for many years to come. The influence and the prestige of the League of Nations, which might eventually have brought about such a restriction, is declining rapidly. Powerful countries, one after the other, are resigning from the League, so that international co-operation in Geneva has become a farce. The activities of the League's Committees, including the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs, are becoming more and more theoretical and ineffectual.

Peaceful co-operation between countries is becoming less real as the danger of wars looms closer, and the War in the East has already made constructive discussions between the Eastern nations, which are vitally important as far as opium is concerned, a thing of the past.

It is not pleasant to admit this fact, but the days of internationalism, to which the whole world looked forward for a brief time after the Great War, are over. The only way open to those who are trying to bring about a restriction of the use of opium to medicinal purposes is that individual countries may introduce and carry out stricter laws. And even such a national control of narcotics may be an entirely illusionary hope, because smugglers are and always will be more internationally minded than are licit traders in drugs. Traffickers are not concerned with national laws any more than they respect international agreements, and they have consistently found a way to circumvent the legal machinery of civilized countries.

The Advisory Committee in Geneva continues to draft



*Chinese coolie smoking opium*



resolutions and recommendations and to make international gestures, but there are moments when these gestures are pathetic in their impotence. During less troubled times, five or six years ago, the Committee's well-meant pronouncements never curtailed the illicit traffic, and now even the control of the licit manufacture of drugs is apparently slipping from the Committee.

At present the history of opium and of drugs seems to be moving along two different planes, connected only by their common source of supply: opium, coca-leaves and the other raw materials from which narcotics are made.

One of these planes is the official, legal manufacture and distribution of narcotics for strictly medical uses, a highly respectable trade, necessary to the welfare of mankind, which, in theory at least, continues to be supervised and organized by the various bodies at the League of Nations in Geneva.

The other plane is the illicit traffic in drugs, which goes on flourishing as though the League of Nations had never been invented.

Occasionally, through the work of the League, it appeared as though the controlled plane in the history of opium were approaching the illicit plane. This happened, for instance, when there was reason to believe that, one day, the world supply of poppy and other raw materials might be restricted to medical needs. But then, when nothing was done, and this restriction remained a topic for discussion rather than a basis for action, realists began to see that these two planes would never meet. In fact, when one reads of increasing drug-addiction in many countries, one is compelled to believe that these

two planes are parallel and will never touch each other. The licit and the illicit trade in opium have never been caught in the same net of control, they do not use the same channels of distribution, nor follow the same price curves, nor the same laws of supply and demand.

It is true, as has been mentioned, that in 1936 the Advisory Committee tried to place the illicit trade under the control of legal official organizations in various countries. A Convention was drafted for "the repression of the illicit traffic in dangerous drugs," but this was one of the Committee's more futile gestures, for to forbid the illicit traffic is as useless as forbidding theft or murder. Both these other crimes have been forbidden by law as long as human penal codes have existed, and the punishment for the latter is far greater than the penalty imposed on drug traffickers, who are directly responsible for the degradation, the ill health, the unhappiness and the death of thousands of individuals whom they have poisoned with their contraband drugs. But nevertheless theft and murder have not ceased to occur, and it is childish to think that any Convention like that of 1936 will stop the illicit traffic in opium poisons.

The most discouraging development in the present drug situation is the fact that the licit as well as the illicit distribution of drugs seems to be increasing, and as the world political situation deteriorates, it is probable that the use of drugs will show a relative increase.

During the first few years after the organization of the Advisory Committee, there was, at least, a certain decrease in the licit manufacture and distribution of narcotics. But this decline has now stopped.

As late as the early thirties, this improvement was still noticeable, but it ceased abruptly in 1936. As compared with the production of dangerous drugs in the five years before 1931, when the position was particularly bad, the manufacture of the five principal drugs, morphine, diacetylmorphine, cocaine, codeine and dionine, showed a marked decrease in 1931-37. (Although cocaine does not really concern us in this history of opium, it is often included for the sake of completeness.)

In view of this encouraging development, the Advisory Committee, in its report to the twenty-third session of the League of Nations in 1938, declared brightly that "the surplus from *lawful* manufacture which might have escaped into the illicit traffic has disappeared."

This optimistic phrase might make an innocent reader of the report forget what is happening to opium in China, or what Japan is doing, or that several drug-manufacturing countries are no longer members of the League and therefore no longer send reports concerning their national drug situation.

As one reads on in the Advisory Committee's report, however, one begins to question this cheerful conclusion. For then the Report concedes an "alarming fact" which occurred in 1936. In that year, so the Report states, there was a very marked general rise in the manufacture of all opium alkaloids and other narcotics. 1936 is the last year for which statistics are available and no one can tell with any accuracy to what an extent this increase continued in 1937 and 1938, when the world was more warlike than it was in 1936.

The manufacture of morphine rose from about 30.8

tons in 1935 to 36.8 tons in 1936, an increase of 6 tons, or approximately 20 per cent.

The manufacture of codeine, one of the very potent opium alkaloids, rose from 19.19 tons in 1935 to 24.3 tons in 1936, an increase of 4.4 tons, or approximately 22 per cent.

The manufacture of dionine, or ethyl-morphine as it is also called, which amounted to 1,850 kg. in 1935, reached 2,600 kg. in 1936, an increase of 750 kg. or 40 per cent.

The manufacture of diacetylmorphine, which had steadily declined in recent years (in 1935 it amounted to approximately 18 per cent of the quantity manufactured in 1929), also rose from 670 kg. in 1935 to 870 kg. in 1936, an increase of 200 kg., or 30 per cent.

The manufacture of cocaine also rose, although owing to the increasing use of substitutes it had fallen considerably in preceding years. In 1936, it was 4.2 tons, as compared with approximately 4 tons in 1935, an increase of 200 kg., or five per cent.

In 1936 there was also an increase in the conversion of morphine into other drugs. This increase, which has continued steadily since 1932, is very serious, because many of the derivatives thus converted, such as heroin, are now so much more popular among addicts than is morphine itself. And as these derivatives can easily be sent to addicts in small doses by post, conversions on a large scale are always a bad symptom, as no one can be entirely sure how much of this converted material is finally absorbed by the illicit trade.

In 1933 the conversion of morphine into other drugs

showed a rise by 2 per cent over the preceding year; in 1934 by 6.3 per cent; in 1935, by 7.3 per cent; and in 1936 the increase in conversions rose sharply from 22 tons to 28 tons, that is to say by as much as 27 per cent.

There are two facts in the last Report of the Advisory Committee which, at first sight, are somewhat encouraging and seem to counterbalance this serious increase in production and conversion. These facts are that world stocks of the five principal drugs have not risen and that the total world exports have declined somewhat.

Morphine exports fell by 230 kg., or 14.5 per cent, as compared with those in 1935. Exports of diacetylmorphine fell by 18 kg., or 8 per cent; those of cocaine by 160 kg., or 13 per cent; and in the case of codeine and dionine, the decrease was 800 kg. and 100 kg., or 16.5 per cent and 14 per cent respectively.

Actually, however, when one looks at this development more closely, this decline in exports is not as favourable as one might think at first glance. For the reduction in the foreign trade of these drugs merely means that they have been consumed at home in the countries of origin. In other words, the populations of the drug manufacturing countries, for some reason or other, took more narcotics in 1936 than in 1935.

The Advisory Committee gives a more detailed account of this increase in consumption of codeine in the manufacturing countries. The world increase of 5 tons was distributed among ten countries, as the table below shows. It is a striking fact that in Soviet Russia, where social unrest has obviously been very great since 1936, this rise should have been the greatest. The following figures

indicate the increase in codeine consumption in the various countries.

	<i>Increase in kilogrammes</i>
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	1418
United States of America	847
Germany	714
France	647
Czechoslovakia	218
Japan	158
Italy	145
Belgium	127
United Kingdom	98
Poland	73

In this connection it should be remembered that all consumption figures compiled by the Committee are very vague, for the compilation of these figures is not yet uniform. This is not merely, however, a statistical disadvantage. This lack of uniformity goes deeper than that: it allows various countries, if they wish to do so, to play all kinds of tricks with their national supply of licit drugs. It is interesting to consider what the Advisory Committee has to say about this.

"At this point," the Committee's Report states in an explanatory paragraph, "attention must be drawn to the nature of the consumption statistics supplied by the Governments which are Parties to the 1925 and 1931 Conventions. In the great majority of countries, such statistics are based on the sales by wholesalers to retailers (chemists), and not on the sales by retailers to the public, as is the case, for instance, in Switzerland. It may therefore be said that there are no first-hand consumption statistics available: the figures are obtained indirectly on the assumption that the amount of drugs sold by

wholesalers in the course of a year represents the annual consumption. Now, it is possible that, for one reason or another, retailers may decide in any given year to buy quantities of drugs in excess of their annual requirements in order to have drugs in stock. The consumption statistics for that year will then show an increase as compared with the previous year, when, in reality, the increase has been in the retailers' stocks."

The whole problem of "Government stocks," as these are understood and interpreted by the Advisory Committee is quite as ambiguous as the question of legitimate consumption. For the signatories to the 1925 and 1931 Conventions are not in any way bound to furnish statistics of the level of Government stocks. To what this complete freedom regarding a country's domestic stocks can lead, is well illustrated at the present time by Japan's activities in China.

In many countries, of course, such Government stocks and their distribution are held well in check by strict national laws. But this brings us to another discouraging phase of the present situation. The present political unrest, and the radical changes in the forms of Government in various countries are not conducive to a conscientious execution of any laws. A parliament may pass certain anti-opium laws, but when this democratic parliament is suddenly replaced by a dictatorship, who can foretell what will happen to this anti-opium legislation. Besides, during violent social upheavals, even democratic parliaments have little time to concentrate on constructive social legislation.

In Palestine, for instance, the Dangerous Drugs Ordin-

ance of 1936 repealed previous ordinances and brought the local registration into conformity with the provisions of the Limitation Convention of 1931, but it is doubtful whether as distraught a country as Palestine will be able to see that these new laws are rigidly enforced. In Russia, in 1936, the control over all factories manufacturing dangerous drugs was put under the People's Commissariat of Public Health, but the work of this Commissariat must undoubtedly have suffered by the change of personnel which seems to have been general in all public offices in Russia during the last two or three years. Germany has not, of course, reported to the Advisory Committee on her domestic drug situation since she resigned from the League, but it is stated by experts that addiction has been increasing rapidly in that country since the beginning of the Nazi regime.

In other countries, political uncertainty has detracted from the effectiveness of anti-opium laws. Czechoslovakia is an example of this kind. On March 19th, 1938, a new law was passed to give effect to the various international opium conventions of 1912, 1925 and 1931. This sounds promising, while actually, of course, as the entire structure and administration of former Czechoslovakia has changed since March, no one can foretell what will happen to this narcotic law in the future.

Then there are countries where the anti-narcotic laws are rigidly enforced, but where the repercussions of wars are felt nonetheless. Egypt is a good example of this type of indirect influence. Russell Pasha, the Commandant of the Cairo City Police and head of the Central Narcotics Intelligence Bureau, is probably the most efficient anti-

opium fighter in the world. In his last (eighth) Annual Report, he can justifiably claim that the two main objectives of the Bureau have been achieved:

"The retail price of heroin, morphine, hashish, and other narcotics," to quote *The Times* of May 19th, 1938, "has been raised to a point at which the peasants—the chief victims of the drug trafficker—and the urban poor cannot afford to buy these poisons. The supplies of narcotics have been traced to their sources abroad; and it may now be claimed that no factory where they are produced without authorization and restriction of output can long escape the vigilance of the agents of the Egyptian Bureau or of the organizations which co-operate with it. That is a notable victory; but as Russell Pasha points out, much remains to be done before the cultivation of the species of hemp from which hashish, the alluring but maddening drug of the Near and Middle East, is produced and of the opium poppy is stamped out in Upper Egypt. He also reports that a deleterious brew of adulterated tea is being consumed as a substitute for the better-known drugs in many Egyptian villages. Further enquiry might discover that some chemical deficiency in the normal diet explains this dangerous craving.

"Another success for the Egyptian Government is also recorded in Russell Pasha's Report. The abolition of the Capitulations has put the foreign trafficker on the same penal footing as his Egyptian ally, and renders him liable to a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment and a fine of £1,000."

Even a country with as firm an anti-opium policy as Egypt is not safe from the dangers of wars being carried on

thousands of miles away. The illicit imports of drugs across the Asiatic frontier are now considerable. Hashish-hemp and not opium are the narcotics brought in from Syria and Lebanon. The Suez Canal is the chief source of danger as far as opiates are concerned. The production and sale of "white drugs" by Japanese and Korean traders in Manchukuo and Northern China, as *The Times* points out, have increased considerably. "It is obvious that this in turn must increase the probability that surplus consignments will be carried westward in ships using the Canal, and that attempts will be made by the traffickers, still an active and dangerous body with ramifications in many lands, to attack Egypt from its most vulnerable flank."

All countries are vulnerable to attack from opium at the present, and if the wars should spread, the entire work of the Advisory Committee would be wiped out overnight. In this connection it is interesting that in the United States, a country still relatively detached from the European and Asiatic upheavals, the drug situation has greatly improved during recent years. Naturally, the Pacific Coast is always a serious danger point, but on the whole anti-opium activities in the United States are relatively successful.

In the middle twenties, the position was extremely bad in the United States. It was estimated that as many as one in every thousand inhabitants was a drug addict. Heroin was the chief drug of addiction. An enquiry carried on by the narcotics bureau, the State police organizations and other official and unofficial institutions showed a marked decrease in addiction in the United States in 1937. In the States which had completed their

investigations when the last report to the Advisory Committee was made, there were only two addicts among every 10,000 inhabitants. This means that there are at the present time about 50,000 drug addicts in the United States, still a terrifying number from the point of view of human disintegration but a marked improvement as compared with the past when addiction was more widespread in the United States than in most Western countries.

One of the American anti-opium workers' great assets has always been the relatively high living standard of the American people. For poverty has never prevented or curtailed the spread of drug addiction. On the contrary, as many districts in India have shown, the greater the poverty and the misery, the greater is the wish to buy drugs.

Poverty as well as wars and social unrest are at present stimulating addiction, especially in the East. And it is obvious that the whole problem of opium and drugs is closely connected with the social upheavals which are now upsetting our restless world. In fact, terrible as this is, the problem of the licit, as well as the illicit, drug traffic, will and can find no solution until, if ever, from somewhere, a lasting international and domestic social peace has been restored. The objective of all drug addicts, as a recent article in the *Indian Medical Gazette* pointed out, is a state of euphoria or forgetfulness, "and it is the quest of the poor and miserable as an escape from their surroundings."

## BIBLIOGRAPHY



*The Anti-Drug Campaign* by S. H. Bailey. King & Co.,  
London, 1937.

*Opium* by John Palmer Gavitt. Routledge & Sons Ltd.,  
London, 1925.

*International Narcotics Control* by L. E. S. Eisenlohr. Allen  
and Unwin, London, 1934.

*The Opium Traffic and Its International Aspects* by Wie T. Dunn,  
Columbia University, N.Y., 1920.

*La Médecine dans Homère* by Charles Daremberg. Paris,  
Librairie Académique, Didier & Co., 1865.

*Histoire de la Médecine Grecque*, by M. S. Houdart. J. B.  
Baillière, Paris, 1856.

*Die Gifte in der Weltgeschichte* by Dr. L. Lewin. Julius Springer,  
Berlin, 1920.

*Dangerous Drugs*, by Arthur Woods. Yale University Press,  
New Haven, 1931.

*History of Drugs* by Monsieur Pomet. J. & J. Bonwiche,  
London, 1748.

*History of Materia Medica*, by John Hill, M.D. T. Longman,  
C. Hitch & L. Hawes, London, 1751.

*The Useful Family Herbal*, by John Hill, MD. W. Johnston and W. Owen, London, 1755.

*Thomas Dover: Physician and Merchant Adventurer*, by J. A. Nixon. British Medico-Chirurgical Journal, March, 1909.

*The Ancient Physician's Legacy*, by Thomas Dover. Bettesworth and C. Hitch, London, 1732.

*Phantastica—Narcotics and Stimulating Drugs*, by Louis Lewin. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., London, 1931.

*Mystery, Magic and Medicine*, by Howard W. Haggard, M.D. Doubleday, Doran & Co., N.Y., 1933.

*The Doctor in History*, by Howard W. Haggard. Yale University Press, 1934.

*Devils, Drugs and Doctors*, by Howard W. Haggard, M.D. Heinemann (Medical Books), London, 1929.

*The Story of Medicine*, by Victor Robinson, M.D. Tudor Publ. Co., N.Y., 1931.

*An important case argued in three dialogues between Dr. Opium, Gallio and Discipulus*. Buchland, London, 1788.

*Geschichte der Arabischen Aerzte und Naturforscher*, by Ferdinand Wustenfeld. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1840.

*Pharmacographia*, by F. A. Flüchiger and D. Hanbury. Macmillan & Co., London, 1874.

*The Opium Evil in India*, by C. F. Andrews. Student Christian Movement, 1926.

*Narcotics in India and South Asia*, by G. H. Alexander. Williams and Norgate, London, 1930.

*Essay on the Opium Trade*, by Dr. Nathan Allen. John P. Jewett, Boston, 1850.

*Anecdotes Arabes, Chez Vincent*, Paris, 1772.

*The Ethics of Opium*, by Ellen La Motte. Century Co., New York and London, 1924.

*The Economic Development of India*, by Vera Anstey. Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1936.

*The Chronicles of the East India Company Trading to China,*  
by Hosea Ballou Morse, L.L.D., Oxford, Clarendon Press,  
1926 (4 vols.).

*The Administration of Warren Hastings 1772-85*, by G. W. Forrest. Calcutta, 1892 (Office of Superintendent of Gov. Printing).

*Report on the Negotiations between the Honourable East India Co. and the Public*, by John Bruce. Printed by the Court of Directors, 1811.

*Joseph Grundy Alexander*, by Horace G. Alexander. The Swarthmore Press Ltd., London, 1920.

*Substitutes for the Opium Revenue*, by Joseph G. Alexander. P. S. King, London, 1892.

*The Imperial Drug Trade*, by Joshua Rowntree. Methuen and Co., London, 1905.

*International Relations of the Chinese Empire*, by H. B. Morse. Longmans, Green & Co., 1918.

*The Revenue and Taxation of the Chinese Empire*. Presbyterian Mission Press, Shanghai, 1903.

*A Critical Study of the First Anglo-Chinese War*, by P. C. Kuo. The Commercial Press Ltd., Shanghai, 1935.

*Opium Smoking in America and China*, by H. H. Kane, M.D. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1882.

Japanese Concessions in Tientsin and the Narcotic Trade.  
*Information Bulletin* Vol. III, No. 4. Published by the Council of International Affairs, Nanking, China, 1937.

"Poison for the People of China." *People's Tribune*, December, 1938 (Shanghai).

"China's Failure to Suppress the Opium Traffic," by Frank Buckley. *Current History*, October, 1931.

League of Nations Reports.









